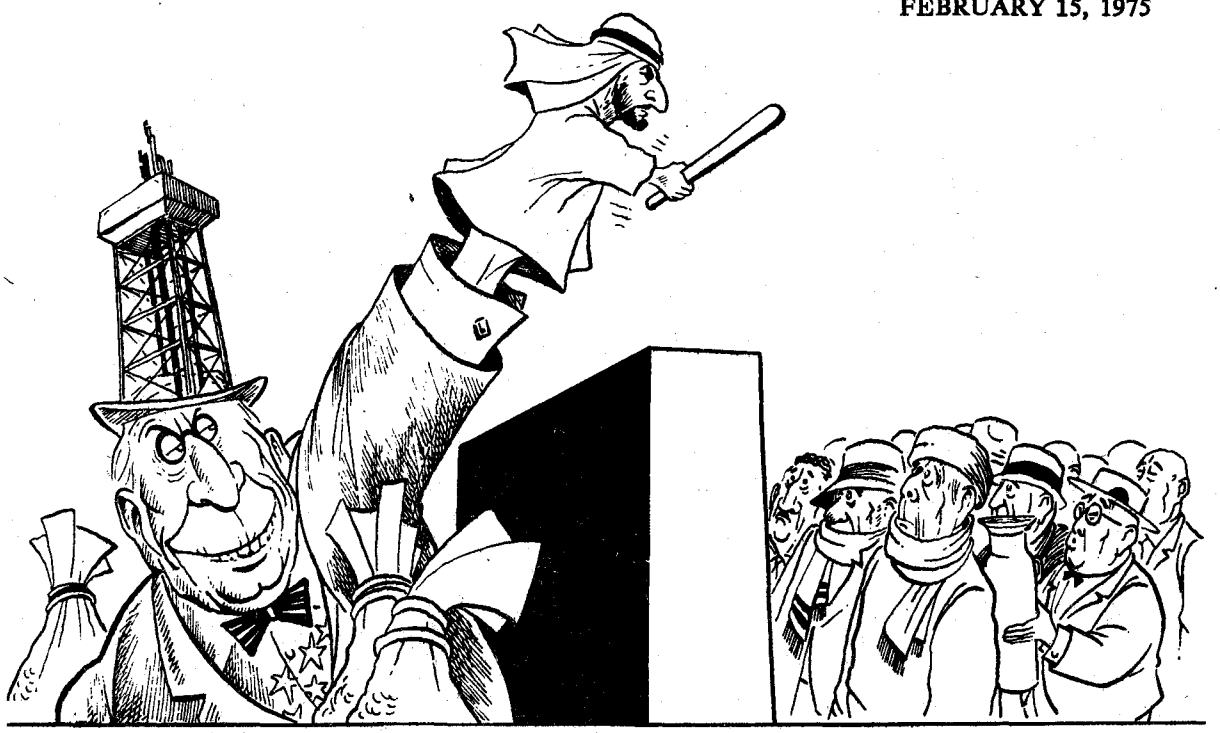
VENEZUELAN MERRY-GO-ROUND **PENNY LERNOUX**

FEBRUARY 15, 1975 *50 cents*



OPEC AND BIG OIL ***LOUIS B. SCHWARTZ***

The Malign Collaboration

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EDITORIALS

The Budget Strategy

No purpose would be served by discussing the economics of the President's budget. On its face, it is so insensitive to the needs of the country that one must assume it was designed to be distasteful to a degree that would insure its rejection. The President and his advisers no more know how to cope with inflation and unemployment in the context of today's world than Hoover and his advisers knew how to cope with unemployment in the world of 1932. Since the system itself faces a crisis, the ordinary Hill and Knowlton variety of cosmetic public relations affords scant hope of working or of providing much political relief. So what to do?

Well, since it is obvious that the Democrats have no plan and are themselves suffering from a different form of intellectual bankruptcy, confront them with a budget which they must reject and thereby shift the onus of continued high inflation and unemployment to them. Keep saying: "We had a plan but the Democrats rejected it. We offered a plan; the Democrats came up with a hodgepodge of programs, but no plan." Then add, by implication, "Our plan may not have been all that great but it might have worked." Since the Democrats will be more concerned with unemployment than with inflation, employment may rise to a degree that will take a little "heat" out of the political situation; then, if further inflation follows, the Democrats can be held responsible.

Make a virtue of being "brutally frank" and "candid," stress the bad news and gamble on winning when the Democrats fumble the ball. Suggest that the way to cope with the oil problem is to hike prices on imports so high that domestic prices will also have to rise, which will mean an end to controls. Assume that high fuel prices will not curb the use of cars. Gamble that if the Democrats opt for gas rationing it will prove to be a most unpopular mess. Of course, the polls indicate that most people would accept gas rationing, but that is only because they think it will be more likely to hit someone else; when it hits them too they will yell. Domestic oil should be conserved, but propose a policy that will have the opposite effect: that will please the big oil interests who are said to have quite a lot of influence in Congress with members of both parties.

Ford's strategy is based on the assumption that the Democrats will not be able to turn the situation around, or that, even if they do, some of the credit might be grabbed, if not by Ford then by a party restructured under the dynamic leadership of his Vice President. In the circumstances, all the President can do is stand pat. Urge the people to sacrifice. Make harsh assessments of the future, by way of being able to say later on that the people were warned.

As with the similarly perverse politics being played with the Vietnam issue, the budget strategy may not work. The President's budget is so bizarre (the high defense spending, etc.) as to be ridiculous, and it just might force the Democrats to do some hard thinking on basic issues and come up with a workable plan instead of their usual batch of improvised stratagems based on obsolete formulas. It is also possible—indeed more likely—that the people will see through the politics of the Ford budget and hold the President and his party responsible, even if the Democrats disappoint them.

Cover illustration: Vadillo, Siempre (Mexico)

The Politics of Obsession

On the second anniversary of Henry Kissinger's most highly publicized "triumph"—the agreement "Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam"—the Administration has asked Congress for $520 million in special military funds for South Vietnam and Cambodia. Some commentators have viewed the request as still another manifestation of Washington's "odd obsession" with Indochina, but circumstances suggest a quite different interpretation. Kissinger is not an obsessionist; he is much too astute to believe that the Thieu regime can be salvaged. He is known to have said that the best that could be expected in the wake of the truce was "a decent interval" of perhaps "three or four years." President Ford is also no obsessionist and although he lacks Kissinger's intelligence he has a few sound political instincts. Not only is this request fiscally irresponsible but it jars harshly in the context of a proposed boost in the price of food stamps; the political hazards are obvious. President Ford is not a good actor and his statements supporting the request were half-heartedly voiced and crudely formulated. For example, his attempt to bolster the request by references to aid to Israel and post-World War II aid to war-ravaged European economies—as though these situations were analogous—had a hollow ring. What, then, prompted the request?

Should Congress vote the funds, the Administration would no doubt spend them, in the hope that the Thieu regime might be propped up through the 1976 Presidential election and that the ghastly stand-off in Cambodia, where no cease-fire was ever negotiated, could be similarly extended. But it is more realistic to assume that Kissinger made the request in the expectation that the new Congress would reject it. Then, should the South Vietnamese regime collapse and with it Kissinger's grand design for peace, the Democrats could be charged with the "loss" of Indochina, much as they were charged with the "loss" of China in 1949.

And there is always a chance that Thieu might be forced out and a settlement negotiated by 1976. If so, fine. But in any case, Kissinger, Rockefeller, Ford and Hugh Scott, all honorable men, will be in a position to say that they met their commitments as Vietnam hawks by voting for continued military aid. Obviously Kissinger does not want to be tagged with the collapse of the Thieu regime. The "peace settlement" won him a Nobel Prize, yet Saigon estimates the number of North and South Vienamese casualties for the last two years at 251,000. There are now 1.4 million displaced refugees in South Vietnam. We have spent $8.17 billion in aid since 1973, more than $11 million a day, and have little to show for it but the dampened American concern achieved by the withdrawal of U.S. combat troops. In South Vietnam, the economy is near collapse, inflation is rampant, disillusion is per-

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vasive, and things generally have gone, as one reporter observes, "from bad to bad."

Kissinger has argued in the past that the failure to carry through militarily in Vietnam would trigger a right-wing backlash in domestic politics; now his actions seem aimed at achieving what he then said he wanted to avoid. But if he contemplates a backlash today, he may well be disappointed. There is slight discernible enthusiasm for resumption of military aid even in right-wing circles; the hawkish Senator Jackson is testing a new modified line on Vietnam. And there is massive opposition to resumption of military support, or anything that might bring about direct U.S. reinvolvement. It is being said, as it has been so often, that a sudden collapse of the Thieu regime might result in a blood bath. But a blood bath is what South Vietnam and Cambodia have experienced for the last two years. Besides, there is reason to believe that the North Vietnamese would much prefer to achieve their objectives politically; they do not seem disposed to launch an all-out military offensive. As to violations of the truce, Maynard Parker, managing editor of *Newsweek International*, writing in the current *Foreign Affairs*—hardly a left-wing journal—points out that "apportioning blame for the breakdown of the truce is . . . difficult; two highly respected staff members of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee found it nearly impossible. In retrospect, I am inclined to conclude that the South Vietnamese were the more guilty party since their actions appear to demonstrate that they never really intended to implement the truce." Almost from the moment the agreement was signed, Thieu began to undercut it. And there is not much evidence that Washington expected him to act differently.

Additional military aid is the only way Thieu can hope to remain in power and as long as he holds on, there will be no coalition government and no real attempt to carry out the agreements. With Thieu gone, there would be a chance for the political settlement that was supposed to follow the cease-fire. So what kind of political morality is it that would continue fueling a war that cannot be won and that won't be settled as long as the fighting continues? As Senator Kennedy has said: our moral obligation is to "help accomplish the political goals of the cease-fire agreements. . . . Regrettably the priority of American policy toward Indochina remains with the means of war rather than the tools for building peace." The new Congress should seize this opportunity to complete this country's military disengagement from the disastrous war in Indochina. It can face the threat of a right-wing backlash with equanimity; a more dangerous backlash might surface should it choose to prolong the war.

Food Stamp Follies

The steep food stamp price increase, scheduled by the Ford Administration to take effect March 1, has been called "Draconian," "simple-minded miserliness." According to George McGovern (D., S.Dak.), chairman of the Senate food and nutrition committee, it represents "the first major step backward in this country's commitment to 'put an end to hunger in America for all time.'"

The cutback originated last fall when President Ford

IN THIS ISSUE

February 15, 1975

EDITORIALS

162

ARTICLES

165 Venezuela: On the Petroleum Merry-Go-Round — *Penny Lernoux*

170 Casing the Democrats #3: Why Udall Wants to Run — *Joseph Stocker*

174 Al Ripskis of HUD: More a Calliope Than a Whistle — *Dave Rothman*

177 OPEC and Big Oil: The Malign Collaboration — *Louis B. Schwartz*

BOOKS & THE ARTS

181 Herzen: Daughter of a Revolutionary
Masters: Bakunin
Lehning, ed.: Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings — *Paul Avrich*

182 Haskell: From Reverence to Rape
Mellen: Women and Their Sexuality in the New Film — *Harriet Kriegel*

183 A Piece of Light (poem) — *Carolyn Stoloff*

184 Zassenhaus: Walls — *Claudia Dreifus*

185 Pickering: Creative Malady — *Helen Merrell Lynd*

185 Sleep, Sleep (poem) — *Marilyn Thompson*

188 Theatre — *Harold Clurman*

188 Art — *Lawrence Alloway*

190 Films — *Robert Hatch*

190 Christmas Eve (poem) — *Ted Kooser*

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asked Cabinet heads for budget-trimming recommendations. Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz, a target of humanitarians for his cavalier handling of the world food crisis and a long-time opponent of food stamps, proposed raising the cost of the stamps from an average of 23 per cent of net monthly income to the maximum 30 per cent for all participants. Ford seemed at first to misunderstand the proposal's implications, but later, after much criticism, still defended it as equitable.

The best assessment of the cutback's impact can be found in a study by the Community Nutrition Institute:

¶ Ninety-six per cent of the 15 million people in the program will pay more for stamps—as much as 800 per cent more in a few instances; most single people will pay 35 to 100 per cent more. One- and two-person households, for the most part elderly, will be hardest hit.

¶ A person with a net monthly income of $146, who previously paid $30 for $46 worth of stamps would pay $43.80 for the same amount. Most aged, blind and disabled persons on Supplemental Security Income would be forced out of the food stamp program because their income would be too high. (A late modification said no one would have to pay more than $1 less than the value of the stamps.)

¶ Because so many people would be receiving stamps worth only a dollar or two more than they paid for them, participants would drop out rather than go through the hassle of the program's bureaucracy. The institute study said a 10 per cent dropout rate was a conservative figure, and that of that percentage—1.5 million people—1 million would be elderly poor. This would save the program $325 million to $350 million more than the $650 million first envisioned, for a total of $1 billion, one-fourth of the entire program. "This would make the new food stamp plan one of the largest cutbacks in income assistance for the poor in U.S. history and perhaps the largest cutback during any period of economic crisis," the study said.

¶ The cutback would take as much as a billion "high velocity dollars" out of the local economies where people lost food stamps.

Legislation to overturn the cutbacks and limit the maximum cost of stamps to 25 per cent of net monthly income has been passed in both houses of the Congress; more than forty Senators and 100 Representatives protested the cutback in letters to Ford and the Department of Agriculture before the latest session of Congress convened. The only question remaining is whether, given the heavy vote for the freeze, President Ford will force Congress to pass the bill over his veto.

Opponents of the food stamp cutback are particularly incensed that Ford should propose a tax cut while slicing away at the food stamps. Most people in the food stamps program are too poor to pay taxes. The cutback was introduced as part of the Administration's fight last fall against inflation. It was completed some two months later, just after Ford had announced another program to fight recession. This time he also proposed a ceiling of 5 per cent on cost-of-living increases due recipients of food stamps and Social Security. The lesson is clear—no matter who or what the Administration is fighting, the poor, particularly the elderly poor, must pay the costs.

JIM CASTELLI

The Levi Appointment

Thanks no doubt to the initiative of Sen. Charles Percy—to whom we are indebted for some other excellent recommendations, including that of James Thompson, the brilliant U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois—President Ford has made a good choice in naming Edward H. Levi as Attorney General. Levi has had virtually no trial experience, but he possesses remarkable management talents which should be a sufficient offset, considering the sad disarray that exists in the Department of Justice. His stands on civil rights and civil liberties are good. He made a fine record when he served (1940-45) as Special Assistant to the Attorney General on antitrust matters. His enthusiasm for antitrust enforcement may have been somewhat dampened by years of exposure to the peculiar brand of economics taught at the University of Chicago, but time will tell. He has an excellent mind, he is a distinguished legal scholar and a man of integrity. Overwhelming endorsement by the American Bar Association is a good omen; the endorsement has quite a different significance today than it did a decade back.

Mr. Levi is also a cautious conservative (would Ford appoint anyone who was not?), but he is a pragmatist, not an ideologue. The most encouraging aspect of the appointment is that Levi is not political; one gets the impression that he has little interest in "practical" politics. In the old days, it was the Postmaster General who served as chief political fixer and contact man, but under Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Nixon, Attorneys General (with the exception of Richardson) were assigned such jobs. In this respect, Johnson did better than those named. President Kennedy's nomination of his brother, Robert, to the office was a major mistake, as *The Nation* noted at the time. Perhaps now we are reviving an older and finer tradition, that the Attorney General should be a distinguished lawyer, a man of judgment, courage and integrity, devoted to the Constitution, and able to turn a deaf ear to partisan political entreaties, telephone messages from the White House, and the presentations of special interests. Always important, the office is today second only to that of the Presidency.

The Big Haul

The trucking industry and its paid help in Congress put over on the public last December a fast one that could result in needless death and damage on the nation's highways. Though opposed by the Teamsters, the American Automobile Association, the government's own National Highway Advisory Committee and a coalition of other sometimes potent groups, the truck owners succeeded in attaching an amendment to last year's highway bill that allows a nearly 7,000-pound increase in maximum truck weight on interstate highways. Another amendment permits even further increases above the new 80,000-pound limit by states that allow heavier trucks. Yet another permits a 2,000-pound increase in axle-bearing weight.

The case against these provisions is clear. At the *previous* limits the monster trucks were dangerous. According to the AAA, more than two-thirds of all persons killed in motor vehicle accidents lost their lives in collisions with

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trucks. The Department of Transportation has found that anyone with the misfortune to collide with a truck is ten times as likely to be killed as is a motorist involved in a car-to-car collision. How much worse are the odds as the trucks become even more formidable? Teamsters, the people who must drive them, say the heavier loads are more difficult to control and are "inviting accidents."

The hazards are so convincing that no weight increases had been allowed for eighteen years. The House again rejected weight hikes last August by a vote of 252 to 159. But a month later, a heavily lobbied Senate put them back—minus the axle-weight increase. Then came the fix.

Aided by a loophole in the campaign finance law, the truck industry dumped tens of thousands of last-minute dollars into the re-election funds of selected Representatives. The law required that post-October 24th contributors be listed before the November election, but the amounts of contributions did not have to be made public until the end of last month. A preliminary inquiry by Scripps-Howard reporters disclosed that all thirteen members of the House transportation subcommittee received checks. At least nine of them were given between $500 and $2,000. Eight other members of the full Public Works Committee, from whose membership the House half of the subsequent conference committee was drawn, received contributions, as did the House Democratic and Republican leaders, Thomas P. O'Neill of Massachusetts and John J. Rhodes of Arizona, and seven members of the Rules Committee, including Rep. Ray Madden (D., Ind.). Some of the contributions had been made earlier.

The investments paid off. When the highway bill reached the House-Senate conference, the weight increases were retained from the Senate bill and the 10,000-pound axle limit voted by the Senate was scratched, even though safety experts maintained that more than 10,000 pounds of weight on a steering axle makes a trailer rig more dangerous to drive. On December 18, just before adjournment, the conference bill was rushed to the House floor. No amendments were allowed, hence no recorded vote was taken on the weight limits. Faced with a simple up-or-down vote on the entire bill, the Representatives voted to let it through. Of the 113 House members who received contributions from the industry, ninety-six voted for the bill. Another eleven did not vote at all. "The Senate bill was an assault on the motorist," commented an AAA executive, "but the conference bill was a rape." The Senate passed it 67 to 27.

There is considerable evidence that this maneuvering by the industry and its Congressional friends will kill people. Apologists lamely argue that the increased weights constitute a trade-off for the 55-mph speed limit on the nation's highways. A quick trip on any of them leaves little doubt about the limit's effect on trucks. Rep. Edward Koch (D., N.Y.) and more than a score of others have co-sponsored needed legislation to repeal the weight hikes. Meanwhile, President Ford has signed the highway bill, the trucks are becoming heavier, and a Republican pollster has found that 69 per cent of the American people agree that "for the most part, the government serves the interests of a few organized groups. . . ."

VENEZUELA

On the Petroleum Merry-Go-Round

PENNY LERNOUX

Caracas

Around a curve in the traffic-clogged freeway, an enormous, naked woman looms out of the smog, riding a tapir and holding a man's pelvis aloft. As she disappears down the dividing line, you think, My God, what was that? That was Maria Leonza, that was—goddess of the Caracas freeways and some local fertility rites as well.

Like everything else in Caracas, Maria Leonza is larger than life, with proportions that would make an Amazon blush. The Venezuelans like everything big, including big statues and big freeways and big buildings. They also boast the world's highest cable-car line and the largest number of television sets per capita in South America. And if you're still not impressed, they will have $10 billion in oil revenue this year, or more than $80 million a month, to build more freeways and skyscrapers.

The trouble is that so many details get lost in the razzle-dazzle. There is no time to admire Maria Leonza, for example, because everyone on the freeway is trying to cut in front of the car ahead in the harrowing, hour-long fight to get from the downtown area to the residential sector only 4 miles away. And having left the freeway, the motorist must figure out how to reach an appointment for which he is already late at a house with no street number. In the rush to construct Latin America's richest, most up-to-date city, the Venezuelans forgot to number the buildings.

Not surprisingly, heart attacks and ulcer cases are reported on the rise. It isn't just the traffic snarl, unmatched even by Los Angeles, or the smog, or the noise—the whole of Venezuelan life is paced to spending more and more money, more and more rapidly. Money, as the country's leading sage points out, is going to be the death of Venezuela.

Previously regarded as an unwanted prophet of doom, Venezuela's Juan Pablo Perez Alfonso is now saying, I told you so, as the statistics on illiteracy, health, unemployment and poverty emerge to describe a nation that has squandered billions of dollars. A type of elder statesman Ralph Nader, Perez Alfonso could never be entirely ignored, for he is the grand old man of the Venezuelan petroleum industry and the father of the Organization of

Penny Lernoux received a citation from the Latin American Studies Association, meeting in San Francisco last month, in "special recognition of her excellent articles appearing in The Nation."

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Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC); but only now, with the recent change in government, unprecedented inflation and food scarcities, are Venezuelans beginning to heed Perez Alfonso's warnings that money alone cannot buy social and economic development. "I am more concerned with what they do with the money from oil than the oil itself," he says.

"Sowing petroleum," the phrase coined by Venezuelan writer Arturo Uslar Pietri when Venezuela was beginning to realize its oil potential, has never been more than that —a phrase. After three decades of multibillion-dollar extravagance, almost every gauge of social development registers negative. For example, Dr. Arcadio Andrade, associate director of the health ministry, reports that in the past seven years the mortality rate has increased and life expectancy has declined, due to poor hospital administration and the "terrible" lack of trained nurses (only one for every 97,000 Venezuelans). The statistics on education are equally dismal, illiteracy being again on the rise after a 20 per cent drop during the years after World War II. In 1961, some 1.5 million children were not attending school. A decade later, the 1971 census showed that 3 million children had dropped out of school or were illiterate, this despite an education program that eats up one-quarter of the national budget.

Forty per cent of Venezuela's 12 million people live in economic and social misery, in tin-and-cardboard shacks in the cities or in adobe hovels in the countryside. One-quarter of the 3.6 million labor force is unemployed or underemployed. One per cent of the population receives 51 per cent of the national income, says President Carlos Andres Perez—and no one disputes him. Yet Venezuela is one of the few surviving democracies on the continent and the richest country in Latin America. So how could all these disasters have occurred?

Inching down the freeways, past the Kentucky Fried Chicken signs, the hamburger drive-ins and the pizza parlors, you begin to realize that none of this is real; it is a caricature of what the Venezuelans have seen in Miami and Los Angeles. Tourist brochures to the contrary, there is very little left in Venezeula that is "typical," unless you include the Indian tribes somewhere off in the remote jungles. Whatever cultural traditions existed—and the Venezuelans admit they were few—lie buried in the economic avalanche of the 1940s, when what President Perez calls a "petroleum mentality" came to dominate social attitudes. Because the foreign-owned oil industry always bought the most expensive, up-to-date equipment and technology, the Venezuelans came to believe that everything, whether a furniture factory or a school, depended for success on costly gewgaws, preferably foreign. "People judge quality by price," complains Alex De Santis, head of the Venezuelan Furniture Manufacturers' Association. Thus, Venezuelan industry went on a buying spree abroad, while successive governments plowed billions of dollars into social services and infrastructure—the idea being, as Perez Alfonso points out, that the more money spent, the better the project.

In the beginning were the white elephants of dictator Marcos Perez Jimenez (1952-58), such as a mountaintop hotel perpetually shrouded in mist and a ski resort at the staggering height of 16,000 feet. With the return to democratically elected governments, these flashy displays were replaced by the development of such basic industries as steel and petrochemicals. Large sums also went into road and housing construction, agrarian reform, education and manufacturing. However, none of these grandiose schemes took into consideration the essential factor of human resources; therefore many of them, notably the corrupt petrochemical industry and the incompetent educational system and agrarian reform, are failures.

Other South Americans often comment on the rudeness of the Venezuelans, but from beneath the show of *nouveau riche* arrogance emerges a warm and hospitable people with a deeper commitment to loyalty, friendship and frankness than many of the more sophisticated peoples of Latin America can display. These characteristics appear slowly, however, and are not apparent to the casual visitor or sometimes even to the Venezuelan. "If you think we are rude to the *musiues* (a corruption of *messieurs*, meaning foreigners), you ought to see how we treat each other," commented a university student. Perhaps it could not be otherwise in the abrupt transition from a backward, cattle-ranching society to an oil-based economy. Unlike Peru or Mexico, Venezuela has no Indian heritage, and the European migrations that so influenced Argentine and Chilean society took place here in the 1950s and will not be absorbed for another generation. Money has therefore become the chief yardstick, but as a Venezuelan agronomist points out, "You cannot put a poorly educated bureaucrat out in the countryside and say, O.K., here's all the money you want, go organize a peasants' cooperative. The illiterate peasants don't know what the government official is talking about and the bureaucrat, who can't tell one strain of grain from another, doesn't know what he is talking about either, yet the government in Caracas keeps pouring in the money. And then they wonder why food production has declined."

If oil produced so many illusions, politics have also contributed to the country's social and economic woes. Until 1958, the country was ruled by a succession of unsavory dictators, including Juan Vicente Gomez (1909-35), a semi-literate *bandido*. Not until 1964 did Romulo Betancourt become the first democratically elected President in Venezuelan history to finish his term in office. In the decade since, three elected governments have followed in constitutional order, and a Cabinet crisis no longer ensues every time a general sneezes. Indeed, the prolonged baptism by fire has strengthened Venezuela's political parties; they have learned the value of consensus and the need for a loyal opposition.

But perhaps because the freedom to engage in politics is still relatively new in Venezuela or simply because it is a Latin American tradition, the parties view public administration as an enormous pork barrel. As a result, every office in the expanding bureaucracy, down to the messenger boy, is filled by followers of the party in power. This desire to "sow votes in the next election" has had serious effects throughout the economy. Incompetent people are appointed to office—not an exclusive Venezuelan trait—and such priority programs as agrarian reform, education and slum rehabilitation have been badly dam-

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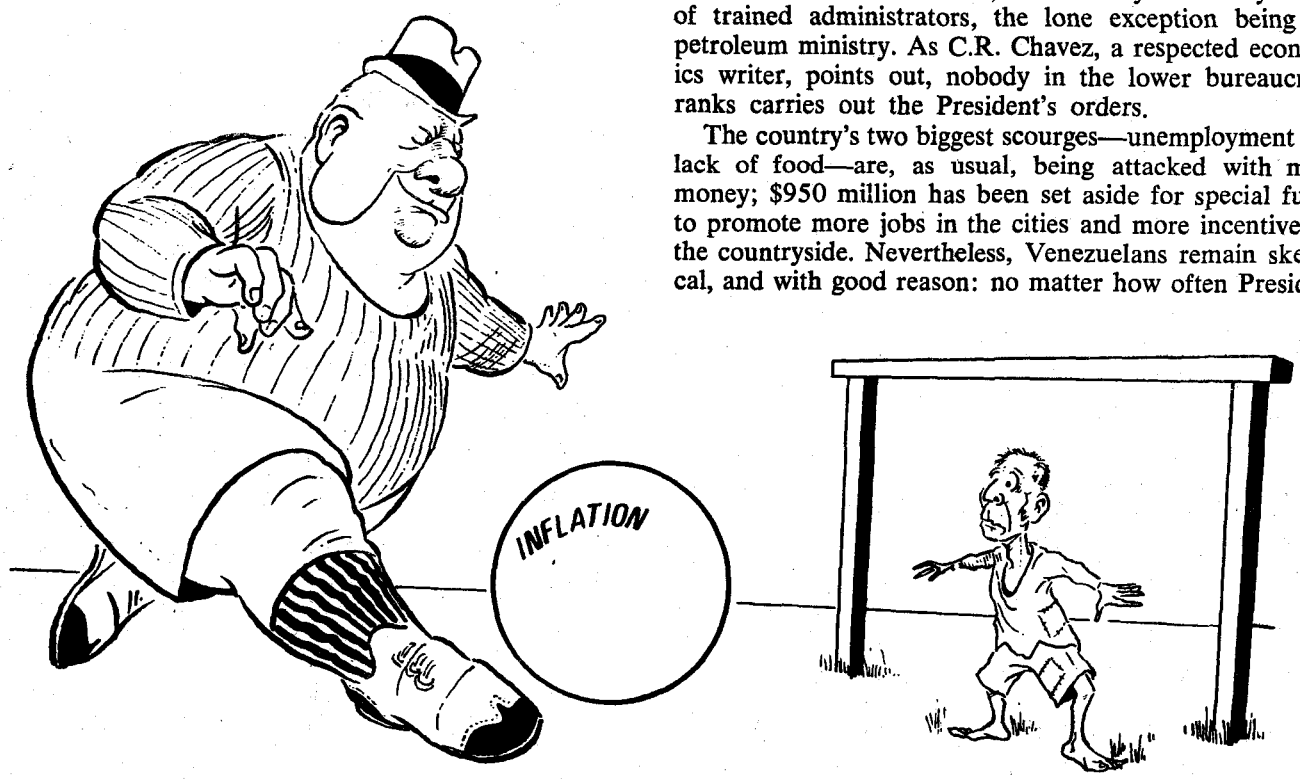
aged by partisan politics. Qualified teachers belonging to the wrong party are replaced by semi-illiterates, and the installation of the sewage system in a Caracas slum hangs on the number of votes delivered. Out in the countryside, peasants abetted by one party invade the lands of peasants with a different political affiliation. While Venezuela's two principal parties, Democratic Action (A.D.) and the Social Christian COPEI movement, are the worst offenders, all the politicians play the same game. Consequently, many Venezuelans are disillusioned with politics. Even in Caracas' Central University, traditionally a hotbed of radical politics, students are turned off by partisan proselytes, whatever their stripe. The Venezuelan Communist Party cannot get a foot in the door, and its younger offshoot, the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) which is led by ex-guerrillas, is viewed as bourgeois.

Though not quite so unbridled today, political patronage continues in the new government of President Perez, who, as the Interior Minister in an earlier A.D. government and the protégé of A.D.'s undisputed leader, Romulo Betancourt, has learned the price of power to the last cent. On the other hand, he is unwilling to sacrifice personal ambitions to the A.D. hierarchy, and with a landslide victory to bolster him, has been able to challenge the party hacks by appointing independents and loyal Perezistas to key positions. Perez talks frankly about the country's problems, and that is a novelty for a Venezuelan head of state. Underlying his concern and that of *"El Hombre,"* as Betancourt is known, is the fear that Venezuelans may eventually reject their fledgling democracy. Certainly, there are enough examples of what might happen in the sea of military dictatorships south of Venezuela. Unlike Colombia, South America's only other stable democracy, Venezuela cannot blame a lack of money for the statistics of poverty, particularly now with the bonanza from the energy crisis. Thus Perez has no easy way to explain why a rich democracy cannot feed, clothe or educate the impoverished two-fifths of its population.

Perez Alfonso, himself a member of A.D., worries that Venezuelan politicians will never get off the petroleum merry-go-round, and he may be right. Like King Midas, the Venezuelans seem to accumulate more problems every time OPEC puts the touch on the industrialized world. Accustomed to an annual inflation rate of 2 to 3 per cent, the Venezuelans were naturally shocked in 1973 when the cost of living jumped by 11 per cent, but that rise was nothing compared to the 1974 inflation, which reached 12.18 per cent by the end of August. The outlook for this year is even worse, for the $9.8 billion budget, nearly three times as big as the previous one, is definitely inflationary, no matter what the government says. "It's a spending orgy," says Domingo Rangel, the head of MAS.

So far, most of the government's moves to reduce the inflationary squeeze on the poorer classes have increased the cost of living. For example, a 25 per cent wage increase, decreed shortly after Perez took office last March, immediately rebounded in price hikes. Similarly, a government freeze on basic consumer goods resulted in artificial scarcities. The government's response is to import these items to flush out the speculators, the only snag being that such imports run counter to the drive to strengthen local industry. The government is placing $3 billion, or more than half its foreign reserves, in overseas assets and loans to stem the dangerous cornucopia, but this, too, has drawbacks. Many Venezuelans, particularly the poorer classes, complain that charity should begin at home. The problem is that, while the Perez government understands Venezuela's dilemma, it is severely limited by a lack of trained administrators, the lone exception being the petroleum ministry. As C.R. Chavez, a respected economics writer, points out, nobody in the lower bureaucratic ranks carries out the President's orders.

The country's two biggest scourges—unemployment and lack of food—are, as usual, being attacked with more money; $950 million has been set aside for special funds to promote more jobs in the cities and more incentives in the countryside. Nevertheless, Venezuelans remain skeptical, and with good reason: no matter how often President



Vadillo, Siempre (Mexico)

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Perez denounces inefficiency and corruption in government, the venality continues, only now the stakes are much higher because of the oil boom. In any case, unemployment, which is a direct outgrowth of the petroleum complex, cannot be reduced until the state stops subsidizing industry's purchase abroad of expensive, capital-intensive equipment, and this the government has been loath to do.

Venezuelan companies boast the most modern, expensive and labor-saving equipment in South America, but as a result they are overcapitalized for such a small consumers' market and few of them can compete, even in the South American market. Consequently, Venezuelan industry overall is working at 71 per cent of capacity, unlike some of the poorer countries, such as Colombia and Peru, which long ago decided that only exports with a high labor input could compete on the world market.

The Perez administration is on the right track when it says that most of the industrial fund must go toward the development of small- and medium-sized, labor-intensive industries. Unfortunately, the track leads right back to the original quandary of a scarcity of workers sufficiently educated to do more than the most menial chore. "The educational system is the worst in South America, starting with the 1st grade and going right through the university," says a Venezuelan lawyer. Even a mediocre education is better than none at all, but only a minority of Venezuelans ever achieve that. Meanwhile, the population is increasing at the rate of 3.6 per cent per year when the school system is already so overworked that the government recently had to close down 80 per cent of the school buildings for a prolonged period of repairs.

With industry supplying only 10,000 to 15,000 jobs per year, even the moderately educated of the 120,000 youths who enter the labor force have difficulty finding a job (never mind the already unemployed), and every week bigger crowds of unemployed men wait in the parks for someone to give them a temporary job digging or painting or anything. The implications for the future are terrifying. As nutritionists have shown, brain power is directly related to the diet of mother and child, but up in the slums ringing the hills of Caracas, few can afford milk, much less meat. The average monthly income is only $55, yet a pound of black beans, staple of the poor man's diet, costs $1.28, "when you can get them."

Every Latin American capital is surrounded by slums, but in Caracas there is one important difference—they overlook a city of enormous and obvious wealth. While hundreds of people fight with the vultures for the pickings on the city garbage dump at Ojo de Agua, down in the valley the freeways are packed with flashy new models, and a forest of skyscrapers rises beside them. "You will have noticed," says an ambassador's wife, "that nobody in Venezuelan society would dream of serving anything but French champagne and Iranian caviar at a cocktail party. Smoked salmon really is *déclassé*."

But whatever the defects of the city slums, they are infinitely preferable to the countryside, where wages are the lowest in the nation and social services nonexistent. "Rural life is sad," says a director of Fundacomún, a private foundation working in the city slums. "Only the passive, the least ambitious remain, all the others leave for the cities."

With the exodus from the countryside has come a decline in food production and an increase in imports; Venezuela today can satisfy only 50 per cent of its food needs, despite an abundance of rich agricultural land. South of Caracas, in the verdant valleys of the central highlands, mile after mile of coffee plantations have been abandoned to the rain forests. Farther west on the rolling plains of the *llanos*, cattle ranchers unsuccessfully look for prospective buyers. Everywhere the picture is the same. Once a sugar exporter, Venezuela must now import this product. A cattle country until twenty-five years ago, its people today buy their meat from the Colombians.

The agricultural slump is not due to lack of money; billions of dollars were invested in the rural sector. Rather, it is the result of poor administration and lack of planning, as the agronomist pointed out. There are some notable exceptions, such as the IDB-financed project covering sixty-four villages in western Venezuela, but for the most part there has been no follow-up with seeds, credit and technical aid.

Like those of most Latin American countries, Venezuela's sixteen-year agrarian reform has proved a failure. Not only have the peasants not increased agricultural production, but ownership is as askew as ever, with 2.5 per cent of the farms occupying 80 per cent of the arable land. Faced with the alternatives of social justice in the countryside—which never worked anyway—or food scarcities in the cities, the government has opted to downgrade land redistribution in favor of agricultural productivity. The $476-million fund which the government has allocated for agriculture will not go into peasant cooperatives, as Agrarian and Livestock Bank president, Juan Stredel, claims, but into large agro-industrial enterprises which are the only organizations with a technique and organization that can reduce the food deficit.

"Stredel is dreaming if he thinks peasant cooperatives are going to increase productivity. We have only to look at what has happened in the past sixteen years," said an executive of the National Agrarian Institute. "Forty per cent of the country's agronomists are unemployed, and it is possible that these people could develop efficient, medium-sized farms with government help, but the real push for productivity will have to come from agro-industrial complexes owned by big-money interests in the cities. Such complexes will not improve the peasant's standard of living, and he simply will revert to peonage. Stredel can talk about 'abandoning the traditional, individualistic agricultural structures,' but the truth is that in most cases the peasants lack sufficient education to run efficient cooperatives." So much for keeping them down on the farm.

For all of Venezuela's multiple problems, there is very little of the buck passing so common in other Latin American nations that blame the industrialized world, and particularly the United States, for their problems. The Venezuelans passed that stage of nationalism five years ago; now when they speak out it is with authority, a sense of equality and the maturity to say, as President Perez has said, "We have only ourselves to blame."

He believes that one of the economy's fundamental

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weaknesses, in addition to its excessive dependence on oil of course, is that it is too closely tied to one commercial and technological system, that of the United States, and the statistics bear him out: 65 per cent of the foreign investment in Venezuela comes from the United States. In order to loosen the knot and give Venezuelan companies more say in important management decisions, the Perez administration has accelerated the takeover of majority control of foreign subsidiaries by Venezuelan capital and has gone forward with plans to nationalize the $4.7-billion foreign-owned oil industry and two iron mines owned by U.S. Steel and Bethlehem Steel.

These decisions have not been abrupt nationalizations of the common Latin American variety. They were carefully planned, with the participation of all the country's parties and even the businessmen's federation. With $4.5 billion in the bank, Venezuela does not need grandstand plays, and when its representatives sit down with foreign executives, they are greeted with sober respect.

This is in part because Venezuela has earned its credentials in the rough and tumble of the petroleum world, where it led the Arabs to OPEC, but also because the Venezuelans know what they want and have the money to buy it. "What we want is technology," says Finance Minister Hector Hurtado, "not more foreign subsidiaries." Such retail chains as Sears, Roebuck and a Rockefeller-owned string of supermarkets already are on the block, and all foreign subsidiaries engaged in internal commerce have been notified that they must sell 80 per cent of their stock to Venezuelans by May 1, 1977. Foreign companies in other sectors are expected to divest a majority of their stock within the fifteen-year deadline set by the Andean Pact, a six-nation common market which Venezuela recently joined. Despite the grumbling, nobody is rushing home. The foreign-owned banks, which earlier were forced to sell a majority of their stock to Venezuelans, have shown that it is possible to profit from a smaller share of the pie when it consists of 10 billion oil dollars. Those who want a place at the table, however, will find it increasingly more difficult to do business in Venezuela unless they are prepared to share their technology with the locals since, for once, money is not the sole consideration.

The oil companies, on the other hand, have nowhere to go but home, because the government insists that there can be no foreign participation in that industry. "Instead of the shares belonging to North Americans and Englishmen, which is now the case, they will belong to the state," says Mines and Hydrocarbons Minister Valentín Hernandez. The takeover will begin this year and when completed will leave a state-owned holding company in control of the five biggest firms (Exxon, Shell, Mene Grande, Mobil and Gulf). The smaller ones will be reorganized into a sixth state-owned company. The foreign petroleum companies accept nationalization as inevitable, but still hope for some crumbs in the form of marketing contracts, a likelihood for the short run at least, as Venezuela has neither the overseas outlets nor the tanker capacity to market its oil. "We can nationalize the companies, but we cannot nationalize the markets," says Fernando Baez, vice minister of Mines and Hydrocarbons.

In the long run, however, the Venezuelans want to market their own oil on a government-to-government basis, which they believe would eliminate the high company profits and bring some relief to the consumer. Among the hard-liners in OPEC, with Iran and Algeria, the Venezuelans have no time for the oil companies' breast-beating. The Mines and Hydrocarbons ministry calculates that the companies made 33¢ net profit per barrel out of last year's energy crisis; therefore when OPEC slapped an additional 3.5 per cent tax on the companies for the last quarter of last year, the Venezuelans went the Arabs one better by making it retroactive for all of 1974. "We figured this was one way to prevent the companies from passing on the increase to the consumers," said a ministry spokesman.

As the world's third largest petroleum exporter, Venezuela no longer enjoys the power it possessed during the 1960s when it was number one. But that's all right with people like Perez Alfonso, who for years has been urging the government to reduce production and conserve reserves, which are good for only another eleven years at current production rates. With more money than it knows what to do with, the government is at least heeding Perez Alfonso's warning and has cut production from a daily 3.7 million to 3.1 million barrels as part of a gradual reduction which will reach 2.7 million barrels this year. Meanwhile the Venezuelans are hedging their bets with overseas investments and are discussing a barter scheme to supply Great Britain with oil for the rest of the decade in return for the same number of barrels from North Sea wells when they come on stream in the 1980s. A similar agreement has been reached with oil-hungry Peru, which will return the Venezuelan oil when its Amazon wells start producing four years hence.

The Venezuelans, who spend their wealth haphazardly at home, are following a judicious and enlightened policy abroad. Unlike the industrialized world, which devoted only 0.3 per cent of its gross national product to the developing nations in 1973, Venezuela has earmarked 12 per cent of its GNP for low-interest loans to its poorer neighbors in Latin America. These loans differ substantially from the questionable, old-fashioned handouts of the Alliance for Progress in that they are not tied to the purchase of Venezuelan products and, more important, are industrial development loans instead of funds for fiscal purposes, such as a budget deficit. Moreover, these are no ordinary development loans but form part of Perez's strategy to teach the Latin Americans to stand up to the industrialized world and demand equal terms.

Seven years after the hemisphere summit at Punta del Este, the Latin Americans are still waiting for Washington to answer their plea for better trade terms instead of aid programs, which have indebted the Latin American economies to the tune of $20 billion. The Venezuelans are well aware that begging is futile, since they have unsuccessfully sought trade concessions as an acknowledgment of their unbroken record of supply to the United States through wars and embargoes. (The United States buys 8 per cent of its oil imports from Venezuela.) They have also learned some hard lessons in OPEC, which was formed in response to the oil companies' unilateral decision to slash prices by 40¢ a barrel in 1959.

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Undeterred by threats of reprisal from Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger, the Perez government insists that "the only way the Americans will listen is if they have to deal with a whole series of OPECs." To that end, the Venezuelans have committed $80 million to Latin America's coffee consortium and offered to help finance the Central Americans' fledgling banana cartel.

The Central Americans, who have been badly hurt by the energy crisis, earlier sent a plea to Venezuela to bail them out with bargain-priced petroleum. It would have been an easy compromise that solved nothing, in many ways similar to the Alliance for Progress. The Central Americans, even with cheap petroleum, would still be paying inflated prices for imports, from the industrialized countries and in so doing would lose any economic impetus for development. The Venezuelan formula rejects a perpetuation of the *status quo*, aiming instead to give these countries the financial support they need to develop their own cartels which will allow them to negotiate better trade terms with the industrialized countries.

Coffee and bananas are not strategic commodities, but both organizations have fared quite well given their recent formation. As in the case of OPEC, the cartels are the outgrowth of the United States' refusal to recognize that many of the problems of the developing countries stem from their diminishing purchasing power in relationship to the dollar. Two decades ago, for example, 124 sacks of coffee purchased one jeep; today the price is 344 sacks.

By refusing to renew membership in the International Coffee Agreement, a pact between consumer and producer nations to regulate supply and demand, Washington encouraged the Latin Americans to go it alone. The official explanation at the time was that the international coffee market no longer needed controls. Privately, however, U.S. negotiators admitted that they were convinced that the coffee producers could never maintain discipline and that consequently there soon would be an oversupply with a resulting decline in prices. That prediction might have proved true had Venezuela not come to the rescue with a promise to finance the weakest link in the Latin American chain, the Central American producers. With Venezuelan support, the Central Americans can now join with the other Latin American coffee producers in retaining 10 per cent of the 1973 harvest and 20 per cent of last year's harvest in order to maintain stable world prices. Since Latin America dominates three-quarters of the world trade, the Venezuelan loan had an immediate effect on international prices which rose 12¢ a pound.

Commodity cartels are frowned upon in Washington, of course, but as long as the industrialized countries continue to insist that they, and they alone, are entitled to run the international monetary system, the developing nations have no alternative. Venezuela contends, and so do all the Latin American countries, that economic cooperation means an upgrading of everyone's standard of living, not just that of the Americans. Accordingly, the Venezuelans prefer to give development loans rather than cheap petroleum, to their Latin American neighbors. Bananas and coffee and copper and all the other commodities the United States has been buying cheaply from its "Latin American warehouse" will cost more, and that increase will allow the Latin Americans to close some of the gap between them and their affluent neighbor to the north.

The sad part of it is that, while the Venezuelans see so clearly their international objectives, they are unable to apply the same imagination and pragmatism at home. The oil wealth that has proved a boon for Latin America is in many ways the bane of Venezuela. It is possible, of course, that the Venezuelans may learn, as have many Americans, that the quality of life does not depend on the number of freeways or skyscrapers built or the amount of money the government spends. □

CASING THE DEMOCRATS #3

WHY UDALL WANTS TO RUN

JOSEPH STOCKER

Phoenix, Ariz.

Arizona, the small state (six electoral votes) that produced Barry Goldwater, an ultra-rightist Republican nominee for President, may be about to produce a liberal Democratic Presidential nominee cast in the mold of John Kennedy and FDR. The Democrat is Morris King Udall and his credentials are as follows:

¶ Thirteen-plus years in the House of Representatives.

¶ A petition signed by about forty-five fellow House members, urging him to take a shot at the White House (". . . one of the most effective legislators and engaging personalities in the House . . . could have widespread national appeal. . . .").

¶ Descendant of a Mormon clan which—thanks to some early-day polygamy—now numbers some 500. ("My mother added up once and I had 114 first cousins.")

¶ A solid record on environment, civil rights, education and Congressional reorganization, among other things.

¶ Integrity: He split with Lyndon Johnson on Vietnam, admitting in a speech at a well-publicized forum in Tucson that he'd been wrong to defend the war. Udall's brother, Stewart, was at the time LBJ's Secretary of the Interior.

¶ Guts: He took on Speaker John McCormack, risking retaliation for trying to unseat the Massachusetts titan, but resolved to focus attention on the domination of the House by doddering ancients. Then, the wounds of his defeat barely scabbed over, he took on Hale Boggs for the majority leadership and lost again under the combined opposition of Big Oil, Big Mining, Big Labor and Big Transportation.

Joseph Stocker is an Arizona publicist and free-lance writer.

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¶ Candor: "I recognize a long shot when I see one, and I'm one."

¶ A Stevensonian wit that tilts toward funny stories to illustrate serious points and toward a gentle spoofing of self and of politicians in general. (To a group of Indiana delegates at the recent Democratic mini-convention in Kansas City: "I once wrote an article deploring the year-long Presidential campaign. Now here I am bringing you the two-year-long campaign.")

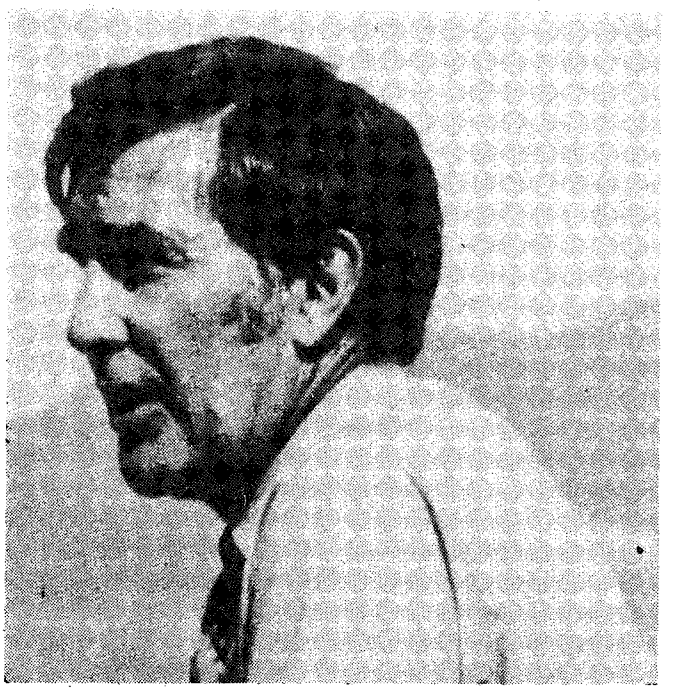
Long shot or not, the 52-year-old Udall could well be the beneficiary of a confluence of events. First, Watergate has left—and the economic crisis continues to stimulate—a public hunger for honesty and openness in the Presidency. Udall, except that he is an inch taller, looks remarkably like an unbearded Lincoln and has qualities of intellect, wit and eloquence that are almost eerily reminiscent of the Civil War President.

Second, the withdrawals of Edward Kennedy and Walter Mondale from the race left a void in the liberal outback of the Democratic Party. The conservatives have Jackson and Bentsen; the Yahoos have Wallace. To a great many people in the party's liberal wing, Udall seems by far the most promising among a sizable gaggle of possibilities. Besides, he's getting a rather nice head start.

Third, Udall—and just about everybody else, for that matter—anticipates that the 1976 Democratic Convention will be "brokered." Since Kennedy is out and nobody else is likely to steamroller through to a first-ballot nomination, Udall figures he should have as good a chance as any, and better than some. Congressmen always influence the selection of delegates, and forty-five Congressmen are with him for starters. The new proportional representation system means that any candidate who receives 15 per cent or more of the votes at a state convention or in a primary gets a proportionate number of votes at the national convention. This, reasons Udall, portends a deadlocked convention, giving away ultimately to the smoke-filled room where the power brokers can make their deals. "I say," he quips, "let's get the Presidential nomination out of the convention and into the smoke-filled room where it belongs."

And finally, the new campaign finance law places stringent limitations on what a candidate can get and spend. Udall had a hand in writing it and thinks it puts an end to the era of fat-cat financing and jillion-dollar campaigns. "It's one of the reasons I'm in the race," he says. "And it kinda came home to me at Kansas City." A prominent and well-heeled liberal, whom Udall prefers to leave nameless, wanted him to come down more heavily on the issue of quotas for minorities and women at Democratic conventions. "I was trying to keep bridges out to all elements so I could be a harmony candidate," he says. "One of my staff said, 'Oh, that's too bad. He can really hurt you.' And I said, 'Yeah, but, two years ago he had the power to deny me a half-million dollars. Now he has the power to deny me $1,000.' I feel very good about that."

Udall, to be sure, has problems. He voted for right-to-work, which is why Big Labor regards him a little edgily and opposed him for Majority Leader. He says he personally dislikes right-to-work, but Arizona voters twice, by referendum, have evinced their allegiance to it. "I was



Morris K. Udall

caught squarely in the middle," Udall recounts frankly in his *Education of a Congressman*. "If I went with labor on what its spokesmen considered a supremely crucial vote, my Congressional career might have ended right there." He notes that his overall record is nonetheless better than 80 per cent pro-labor. The fast-growing public employee unions and teacher organizations like the NEA have a warm affection for him. And oddly, or perhaps not, the National Right to Work Committee hates his guts.

Also on the subject of Udall's warts, you hear it said around Arizona that he (*a*) votes liberal but talks conservative, especially at election time, and (*b*) takes liberals for granted in his home state. "He doesn't really have to appeal to them," says a Tucson newspaperman; "they don't have anywhere else to go."

To these allegations Udall replies as follows: (*a*) "That's been said in every campaign out here. I've asked every opponent to give me a bill of particulars and none of them ever has. As a matter of fact, I have advisers and friends who tell me almost every year not to be so outspoken. But I've opted for writing newsletters on tough issues and taking stands. I think people respect that more. I know how to fuzz a record if I want to, and I haven't." (*b*) "These have been lean years for Democrats in Arizona. I'm the only Democrat left in the Congressional delegation. Being from a conservative state, I don't come out here and advertise what a great liberal I am. I tend to emphasize those parts of my philosophy and program that a majority of Arizonans agree with. That's traditional in politics. If you go to a businessmen's meeting, you don't have to be a hypocrite, but you'll emphasize those programs and bills and policies with which that group agrees. And that evening, with labor, you talk about the parts of labor's program that overlap your views."

Mormonism is also a problem. In point of fact, Udall

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wears it lightly. Arizonans view him as a "jack (apostate) Mormon," and he says himself that he has "not been active in the church since World War II." (He is also divorced and remarried, which Mormons don't do very much.) But he says firmly, and a little defiantly, "When I'm asked my church affiliation, I put it down. I'm proud of my heritage and background in the church."

The problem is that the church won't change its aversion to accepting blacks in the priesthood until it has a revelation, and the revelation is slow in coming. This could be an issue in the Presidential campaign, notwithstanding Udall's unassailable record on civil rights. He underscores his "long-standing and deep-seated difference of conscience with the church on its policy toward blacks."

Morris and Stewart Udall were born in the tiny Mormon community of St. Johns, Ariz. They were two among six children of a long-time state Supreme Court justice, Levi S. Udall. "I think I absorbed from Levi a belief that public service was an honorable and satisfying career, that if you have leadership ability, you owe it to yourself and the community to use it," says Morris Udall. "This is in part a Mormon philosophy, too. You'll find that the Mormons have ten members of Congress. That's 2 per cent, and membership of the church nationally is probably less than 1 per cent."

When he was 6, Udall injured his right eye while playing with a knife.The wound became infected and he lost the eye. (At an Arizona gridiron affair he cracked that Sammy Davis, Jr., with his three famous handicaps—black, Jewish and one-eyed—had nothing on a "one-eyed Mormon Democrat from Arizona.") The loss of an eye has scarcely been a handicap to Udall. He was salutatorian of his high school and president of the student body. At the University of Arizona he was again president of the student body, captained the basketball team, was top scorer and all-conference forward. He went on to play pro ball with the Denver Nuggets of the old National Basketball League. Meanwhile, one good eye proved enough to get him into the Air Corps in World War II. He served in the Pacific and came out a captain.

In 1949 he was graduated with distinction from the University of Arizona Law School and placed first in the state bar exam. He practiced with Stewart, became county attorney, lectured on labor law at the university, and wrote a book on the law of evidence which is still a standard reference work for Arizona attorneys.

Stewart preceded him into Congress from Arizona's 2nd District, and served three terms before quitting to join the Kennedy Cabinet. Morris ran for the job in a special election in 1961, won, and has been re-elected seven times, surviving even the years when Goldwaterism ran rampant through Arizona. Stewart has been heard to say that Morris "is a better Congressman than I was." The brothers are close. "I was kind of his eyes and ears in the Congress during all those Cabinet years," says Morris. After leaving the Cabinet, Stewart stayed in Washington, where he practices law and has a consulting firm called Overview, which helps states and communities with their long-range planning. He also lectures extensively on ecological issues.

Recently Morris Udall announced the appointment of his brother as his campaign manager. "Very early in my campaign," he says, "I found developing what seems to be endemic to any political campaign: ego problems, jockeying for power, who's going to be close to the throne, ambitious people wanting to get on board and shove others aside. It seemed to me that that was one of the strengths of the Kennedy campaigns—that a family member, a brother or brother-in-law, could come in and settle things, and everybody knew that that person had no ax to grind, no ego to fulfill, no hope of advancement; that that person was looking after the candidate and his interest. So Stew agreed to step in, at least in these early stages, and knock some heads together and put together a basic organization which would emphasize loyalty to me and my interests."

I asked Udall why he wants to be President:

> I see my country in trouble, the economy at a real crossroads. It may not be as bad as 1932 but it's as fundamental in a lot of ways as '32 was. I see foreign policies that are outmoded, defense policies and priorities that are out of whack. I'd really like to do some things in this area. I think maybe I have—I *hope* I have—the qualities and character to provide a new kind of leadership for the 1970s and '80s, to discuss and act on this whole new range of issues we're confronted with.

And how can a secure and respected Congressman find happiness in what may well be a quixotic campaign and is unquestionably the ultimate ordeal of American politics?

> Well, yes, the Presidential nominating system is an ordeal. But you can rationalize it, and I think maybe properly so.
>
> In a strange sort of way it works. You take a guy and put him through 800 airport press conferences and 900 cold beef dinners and meetings with labor and editors and women's organizations—a whole range of people. You test his digestion. You test his stamina. You test his marriage. You test his sanity. You test everything about him. And if a guy can put up with a couple of years of that, he can certainly put up with the pressures of the White House.
>
> There *is* this dilemma, that some of the people who make the worst Presidents are persons who can stand the ordeal, who glory in it. They chase the Presidency for twenty years with single-minded passion. I'm not sure you want those people. The other horn of the dilemma is the Walter Mondales, who would make very good Presidents but are not constructed to go through the ordeal. So what you need is balance—someone who can put up with enough of it to get himself elected but still retain the thoughtfulness and sensitivity that you want in a President.
>
> Up in New Hampshire, I was comparing a campaign obstacle course the Marines have. You climb a 50-foot wall, swim an alligator-infested stream, climb a rope, run half a mile in three minutes, crawl under live ammunition. Then when you've passed all that, if you're running for President, they send you to New Hampshire for two months and have an editor attack your family and every failure in your life. If you can survive that, you're ready.

The next logical question is: What would Morris Udall do with the Presidency, if he got it? In speeches and in his very literate constituent newsletter (Sen. Edmund Muskie has called it "the best-written and most thought-

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ful in Congress"), Udall has laid out what amounts to a platform.

On the energy crisis: "The test for America is whether we can adapt and change from an era of abundance . . . cheap natural resources . . . to an era of scarcity which is causing this worldwide inflation. I think that the central job of the next President is to get us through that economic transition. . . . Above all, we need to adopt a new ethic—an ethic of conservation, of saving, of using everything to the maximum. . . . We can 'think small'—small cars, small homes, small families, less consumption of resources, and recycling wherever possible. . . . We can plan our communities so that residential areas, shopping centers and public facilities, such as schools, parks, airports and sewage treatment plants, are placed where they can do the most good for the most people. . . . We can make maximum use of our resources. . . ."

On the economy: "There's a lot of good in this old tree called the American free-enterprise economy, but it needs rejuvenation. . . . One of the first fundamentals we must restore is the principle of competition. . . . We ought to break up the conglomerates and monopolies. . . . Many industries just add any increase they want in profit margins to your cost and then charge that amount without fear of being undersold by any competition. This is where much of the real inflation is coming from. Congress and the Administration, rather than looking out for ways to protect companies like ITT, ought to be taking a hard look at the mergers and anti-competitive practices across the board."

On agriculture: "Turn American farmers loose. For three decades we've had farm surpluses and programs to depress farm production. And yet last year (1972), farmers sold $12 billion worth of produce abroad and our balance-of-payments situation would have been even more disastrous without their production. The time has come to set our farmers free and let them produce the wheat, beans, corn and feed grains the world needs. Agriculture was long the sick man of our economy; now it can be a key element in saving us."

On priorities: "If we can't have all the space programs and all the military programs and still provide adequate education and health at home, we must decide which come first. We have to stop the kind of mixed-up economic policies that have given us $100 billion worth of federal deficits in four years, adding immeasurably to the pressures on the dollar."

On overpopulation: "Have the Congress and the President declare that it shall be the goal of the United States to encourage, by decent, humane and voluntary means, a stabilized United States population. . . . Authorize a new Presidentially appointed Assistant Secretary of the Interior to coordinate research and programs having to do with the relationship of population growth and its impact on the natural environment. Create a two-year Commission on Population and the Environment, composed of our most distinguished citizens in private life and public officials, which would, in an impartial, nonpartisan and scientific manner, tell the American people the facts about population growth and its implications and offer detailed recommendations. Foreign aid for birth control programs. . . ."

On governmental reform: Repeal the Twenty-second Amendment [which limits the President to two terms]—"a vindictive act of an earlier generation [that] has already proved to be a mistake." Develop an alternative to impeachment, patterned after the parliamentary vote of no confidence. If two-thirds of the Congress resolves on "carefully specified grounds" that the President is not properly performing his duties, a general election would be held.

On foreign policy: Udall acknowledges that while he is perceived as having a reasonably solid grasp on the three E's—energy, environment and the economy—few credit him with any expert knowledge of foreign policy.

"I give two or three answers to that," he says. "One is, the question implies that there is some kind of institute where you could go and get a certificate to hang on the wall. It would say that you are now qualified to be President—certified B-plus in economics, A in foreign affairs, D in something else, etc. If that were the case, Abe Lincoln would never have passed the admissions committee and Harry Truman would have flunked out the first semester.

"I think this is a simplistic assumption. . . . When you elect a President, you don't elect someone to run the day-to-day affairs of the State Department. You elect someone to do three or four things. He's going to chart a general direction and give a moral tone to both domestic matters and foreign policy. He's going to appoint some people. So you want to look at his qualities of delegation. Is he comfortable with strong people around him? Will he listen to advice and get a range of options, and then be decisive the way Harry Truman was?

"Then he's going to make some unexpected decisions—crisis decisions. You didn't vote for Kennedy or Nixon in 1960 based on who could handle the missile crisis with the Russians on a Saturday afternoon; or for Eisenhower because he would know how to handle the desegregation problem at Little Rock High School. You look at character, decisiveness, a broad view of things.

"So I don't feel at all uncomfortable with foreign policy. I've traveled quite widely. I've met over the years with leaders of other countries. I think my track record on Vietnam, arms control, the ABM, foreign aid, the Middle East, the cold war—I've been writing and talking on those issues for thirteen years—is pretty good."

Whether Morris Udall ever gets the opportunity to implement some of his carefully thought-out notions of how the country ought to be managed is problematical. Few members of the lower House decide to run for President, and only one ever got elected—James A. Garfield ("and," notes Udall ruefully, "he got himself shot").

After his defeat by Boggs, hard on the heels of his defeat by John McCormack, Udall was quoted as saying, "The big windows open around here about once every ten years. Even if something opened up, I'm not sure I'd want to go for it. One more loss, and I'm Harold Stassen."

He was probably right. This is his third and biggest reach for leadership and power. On November 3, 1976, the day after the election, Morris Udall will either be President-elect of the United States or another Harold Stassen, telling about a funny thing that happened to him on the way to the White House. □

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AL RIPSKIS OF HUD

More a Calliope Than a Whistle

DAVE ROTHMAN

Washington

Back in 1972, the Department of Housing and Urban Development was abuzz with whether Al Louis Ripskis would soon be sent packing. Nixon's men in the agency had as much use for uppity bureaucrats as Bull Connor once had for civil righters. And yet this gadfly GS-13—not even a "supergrade"—was thumbing his nose at HUD brass by way of his "much-above-ground" underground newsletter. In fact, it was enough above ground for Ripskis, one day while he was hawking *IMPACT* in front of the waffle-faced HUD building, to give HUD Secretary George Romney a complimentary copy.

Minutes later a policeman told Ripskis to scram and it seemed that his bosses might shortly advise him to do the same. "How long Al will be with HUD is a guessing matter," wrote Nicholas von Hoffman, *The Washington Post* columnist, "but, as he says, 'There haven't been any reprisals yet, and if they do send me to Guam, it won't be until after the election.' "

Today, Richard Nixon no longer works at the White House and Ripskis has not only survived at HUD, it might even be said he has thrived. Without being co-opted, he has made his *IMPACT* almost a quasi-official part of HUD. So entrenched is the newsletter that a few top HUD people write for it, although secretly, and Ripskis' immediate superior contributed a book review that won praise from *his* boss. James Lynn, Romney's successor, granted Ripskis a fifty-minute interview in which he said, "I look upon you as a kind of ombudsman for me." In the true *IMPACT* tradition, the first of three installments appeared alongside an article accusing HUD of callousness toward handicapped workers.

Ripskis also reported a conversation with former Under Secretary Floyd Hyde. "People in decision-making levels do read it and do wonder 'How might this look in *IMPACT*?' " Hyde told him, "so I think it performs a very useful function." Uppity as ever, Ripskis printed those remarks next to a story about a HUD-linked new town with a brothel among its amenities.

His critical monthly attracts a readership that ranges from HUD biggies to builders to mortgage bankers to media stars. Sometimes pedestrian, sometimes dazzlingly readable, *IMPACT* is nearly always worth the $5 a year that Ripskis charges, on the theory that people pay more attention if they pay. Richard W. O'Neill, a housing consultant and himself the publisher of a newsletter in New York City, recalls: "It was through *IMPACT* that I first realized that the new town program in HUD was pretty much a total bust." (As far back as April 1973 Ripskis was denouncing the botch-up of what he once considered promising. After saddling the program with incompetent and unenthusiastic administrators, HUD recently said it would finance no more new communities.)

One month, Ripskis may serve up a spicy account of a HUD official—and the taxpayers—subsidizing a mistress. On another, he may be picked up by *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal* when he leaks a top-secret memo critical of departmental policy. And sometimes the troublemaker praises HUD. Ripskis congratulated the agency, for instance, after it put in self-opening doors for the handicapped. Ripskis keeps sounding off so regularly and in such different tones that the term "whistle blower" scarcely fits. He might better be called a "calliope player." Whatever he is, he could well be unique. The national office of the American Federation of Government Employees knows of no other underground newsletter that exposes bureaucratic sins and shortcomings on an agency-wide basis.

When I go to visit Al Ripskis at HUD, I feel myself inside the proverbial bureaucratic ant hill. The halls curve; the General Services Administration, esteeming energy over eyesight, has deprived the building of more than half its lights and, whether large enough or not, the passages seem a claustrophobe's nightmare. In fact, the building—this model of what HUD's urban development czars apparently feel the rest of us deserve—is itself a favorite *IMPACT* target. In January of last year, for example, Ripskis lambasted the cold, wet surroundings which Print and Visual Art employees in the basement had had to suffer for a year. And the next month, *IMPACT* horrified HUDdom with a story about a crack that stretched from the basement to the 10th floor—the top. "My Lord, I'm afraid of it," the Washington *Star-News* quoted a HUD secretary on the front page, "I love HUD and I'm a loyal employee, but I'm not going to sit here in a building that's falling down." Rich Vawter, press representative of the GSA, denied any danger, but to this day Ripskis wonders if HUD is not about to cave in physically as well as bureaucratically.

In Ripskis' 6th-floor office, a picture of the collapsing Pruitt-Igoe building—blown up because the St. Louis high-rise project was unmanageable—in a sense symbolizes both forms of disintegration. Bearded, often wearing blue jeans on the job, the bespectacled Ripskis looks like a 40-ish graduate student. He and I talk—whether at HUD or in his apartment—as if James Lynn were personally snooping on us through a ceiling mike. Ripskis the maverick can operate with bureaucratic prudence. If you want to discuss "sensitive" subjects with him over the phone, you'd better wait until he can call you back from an outside booth. An official once told *Federal Times*, "You can be sure they're going to be watching him very closely—not only HUD but the Civil Service Commission, and who knows, even some of the investigative arms of the government." In recent months, Ripskis has infuriated some bureaucrats and their aides with a series on heavy travel expenses—including those that

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allegedly financed an official's honeymoon. He suspects that it was one of the underlings who slipped into his office last summer and set some papers afire.

In a sense, the fire harked back to Ripskis' native Lithuania. Born thirty-seven years ago in Joniskis, he saw relatives packed off to Siberia. His father, an outspoken teacher, farmer and political activist, fled west. For two years, the Ripskises and another family of four shared one room—a blanket draped over a clothesline in the middle—in a German D.P. camp. Al Ripskis' personal housing crisis continued in Chicago Heights, Ill., where the family endured a series of cramped apartments. Ripskis remembers rats, roaches, cracked plaster, manually stoked stoves, cold basement rooms. After being graduated from the University of Illinois, he went to work where he mistakenly felt he could affect real reform—the Public Housing Administration.

"I moved up in the bureaucracy in terms of grade increases, and my bosses were complimentary on my projects," Ripskis says, but his best ideas either "were put aside or didn't have that much impact." Objecting to the barracks-like appearance of public housing projects, he wanted the government to "develop prototypes, maybe twenty or so, and then within each project mix in all the different kinds of buildings, so that it looked like a regular development rather than a damn project. Well, that never really came off." The PHA also spurned suggestions from Ripskis and other young bureaucrats that it scatter public housing sites. Sure, the idea was good, but wouldn't local communities turn down housing bonds if the wrong people showed up in suburbia? Didn't Mayor Daley's men and other politicos object? So HUD went on letting communities squeeze the poor into new ghettos and stack up families in Pruitt-Igoe skyscrapers. And yet the monstrous projects—with surpluses of young children and deficits of fathers—were certified jungles. When Al Ripskis talks about all the great fiascos, there comes into his voice the same note of frustration and lingering weariness that you hear from "premature" opponents of the war in Vietnam. To the "prematures," the mistakes seemed so instantly obvious: how dared they happen again and again! Yet the senior bureaucrats, instead of acting, thought they could study the problems away. Each year a new task force descended on Pruitt-Igoe—right up to the time the housing pooh-bahs started razing that monument to their own stupidity. Other bumbling nettled Ripskis. He management-reviewed and post-management-reviewed hundreds of housing authorities, and the same woes showed up in case after case: "waste, corruption, high travel expenses, uncollected rents, high vacancy losses, poor maintenance, exterior and interior. . . ."

Set up in 1965, HUD had supposedly pulled together the Public Housing Administration, the Federal Housing Administration and a number of sister agencies. It needn't have become a bureaucratic Frankenstein. "This was a golden opportunity to change things," Ripskis says. And indeed the department plucked him from PHA to serve on a committee that told what was wrong and what to do. Headed by a psychiatrist, the committee said HUD should favor people over brick and mortar—a heretical concept, seemingly, among bureaucrats in charge of HUD.

Al Louis Ripskis

Naively, Ripskis rejoiced over the committee's report; was he not helping to change the bureaucracy from within? Of course, nothing changed—including HUD's tendency to ignore reports.

Feeling trapped in their jobs, nonconformists at various federal agencies in the late 1960s and the early 1970s launched a slew of underground newspapers. They weren't *IMPACT*s, however. Some, for instance, were aimed specifically at women or blacks. Also, the papers tended to be group efforts, rather than the responsibility of one employee, striking out against his bosses. And often, rather than zero in on a particular agency, as *IMPACT* usually focuses on HUD, the newspapers ranged far, denouncing Vietnam or the Nixon administration in general. At HUD, a group-produced paper, *Quest*, was an outlet for all organizations and persons of liberal and radical views—a bulletin board of a newspaper.

One of the issues it took up was a reorganization measure at HUD which the publishers felt jeopardized careers. Jay Thal, a *Quest* editor, helped a few victims find a lawyer to file a suit. And among the few was his friend, Al Ripskis, from the days when they worked together in the Housing and Renewal Assistance Office. Eventually HUD transferred Ripskis to his present job as a program analyst with the Federal Housing Administration, where he was happy. However, Thal believes that the experience "sort of radicalized him." And (if the word "radicalized" fits Ripskis) so did Jay Thal's experiences; for, on June 12, 1972, HUD ordered him "temporarily" to Anchorage for a management review of the Alaska State Housing Authority—an action that gave Ripskis an eerie feeling of *déjà vu*. "To me," he says,

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"this seemed like an exile to Siberia kind of deal." Enraged, Ripskis took over the newsletter. And in *Questing*, he crossed the bureaucrat's Rubicon.

Granted, Ripskis had joined others in suing his big bosses. Granted, too, he didn't publish his name in *Quest*. But for the first time in his career he was truly, as civil servants say, Going Outside the Department. Ripskis did some soul-searching on the matter; then he gave the world The Flagpole article.

Flaunted on the front page of *Quest* for July 25, 1972, it was a media coup that would have made Hill and Knowlton proud. "Flagpole, flagpole," the Associated Press chortled on front pages across the nation. "Who's got the taller flagpoles? The Department of Housing and Urban Development, that's who." The wire story continued:

> The Housing Department is across the street from another giant federal department, Transportation, which has two gleaming 75-foot flagpoles adorning its entrance.
>
> Until a few weeks ago, the Housing Department, known as HUD, was a bush-league flagpoler. It had only a single, skimpy 45-foot pole.
>
> With two fast digs and $26,581, HUD corrected the imbalance. It now boasts twin, 80-foot aluminum poles. An American flag flies on one, a departmental flag on the other. . . .
>
> The flagpole caper was disclosed by an employees' underground newsletter at HUD called *Quest*. It came at an embarrassing time for Housing Secretary George Romney.
>
> Romney threatened to resign last week unless President Nixon gave him money to hire additional employees. The $26,581 cost of the two new flagpoles equals the annual salary of one high-level official or two clerks. . . .

Sure, the A.P.'s dispatch from the flagpole war seemed frivolous when you remembered the millions that HUD had squandered over the years, but it was also incredibly readable—and understandable to taxpayers. And *NBC News* decided it was photogenic.

At *Quest*, however, Ripskis was soon having his own troubles. He wanted a "muckraking journal" that concentrated on HUD and didn't try to back so many causes. A list of "Useful Telephone Numbers" in one issue of *Quest* included everything from the American Civil Liberties Union to the Mattachine Society. So, feeling that one person should set the direction of a publication, Ripskis split. *Quest*'s name and the one he had in mind for his brainchild—*IMPACT*—offered as good an indication as any of the contrasting goals. While *Quest* editors were for the most part content to explore issues and provide a free forum, Al Ripskis had the gall to think he could actually change HUD.

And he wasn't planning simply to war against the department's stupidity by way of *IMPACT* and the media; he believed that he could organize fellow bureaucrats through "Operation HUD." Hadn't Saul Alinsky wrought miracles in seemingly impossible blue-collar neighborhoods? Why not follow his rule of fighting on the battlefield you yourself choose? Rather than map out demonstrations, Ripskis prepared to wage his own paperwork war through a network of "monitors" within HUD. Year after year, instead of blowing the whistle and resigning, the monitors would tell the media—and also the General Accounting Office, Congressmen and others—about the doings and misdoings of HUD as seen by insiders.

It was a question, however, whether Ripskis was a good organizer. Certainly he could be outgoing at times; indeed, he had been elected "block president" of a 125-man dorm at the University of Illinois. But if Ripskis was in an activity, he wanted to dominate it; and, as his *Quest* experience showed, he could not always bring others over to his way of thinking. Also, he struck some HUDers as essentially a private, somewhat withdrawn man—useful traits, to be sure, when bucking bureaucratic pressures, but potentially distastrous when urging other people to create pressures for his causes. At HUD, Ripskis, alumnus of a D.P. camp, worked behind a closed door, yet he wanted his crusade to court 15,000 HUD employees.

On September 6, 1972, *IMPACT* made its debut—typed by volunteers, but printed professionally and circulated to 2,500 people, or more than half the central office. "Dear fellow co-worker," Ripskis wrote. "The department we work for has been sullied by scandals, waste, mismanagement and corruption to the point where Romney himself has admitted that HUD is actually contributing to urban decay rather than reducing it." Then Ripskis ticked off HUD's bungles: Pruitt-Igoe; the bankruptcy or near insolvency of sixty-eight housing authorities —with 35 per cent of the units in the public housing program; the Section 235 Home Ownership Program's having "become a conduit for enriching the real estate speculators at taxpayers' expense"; the 26 per cent rate of default on HUD-backed mortgages of housing projects. "You and I and the other 15,000 HUD employees have contributed to this mess," Ripskis reminded his readers. "Romney and his political appointees could not have created the present conditions without at least the passive cooperation of the rest of us." Around HUD, the talk went that Ripskis might not be long at the agency.

Someone else resigned, however: the star of a story in the second issue. "A HUD OFFICIAL, HIS 'MISTRESS' AND TAXPAYERS' MONEY" was the headline. "Most taxpayers don't know it, but for the last couple of years they have been subsidizing the affair of one very high HUD official, who has been cavorting with his female 'assistant' all over the country at taxpayers' expense." *IMPACT* warned Housing bigwigs that it knew of similar sinners, *but* "if you, as a high HUD official, are just 'doing your thing' with your secretary or special assistant, you have nothing to worry about—as long as it doesn't involve the waste or misuse of taxpayers' money." Over at *Quest*, a women's liberation bastion, some people resented mention of the sex angle, even if the taxpayers allegedly paid the motel bills. And, it can be argued, the story didn't exactly enhance Ripskis' reputation in some quarters as a serious student of the U.S. housing scene. But from a besieged calliope player's viewpoint, the mistress piece *may* have been a wise move. The "sexier" *IMPACT* became as a news story, the greater would be the uproar if HUD wiped its editor off the payroll.

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Of course, *IMPACT* piqued media interest in other ways. It won attention, for instance, for crusading against the delay in coming up with a report that Congress had ordered on lead-based paint. But what victories was Ripskis winning outside the media? Consider *IMPACT*'s impact as seen by *IMPACT*. In September 1973, reviewing the previous twelve months, Ripskis was sanguine about the press—and gloomy about HUD. "Last October," he wrote, "we revealed how HUD was eight months late in submitting the lead-paint report . . . Now, twenty months past the Congressional deadline and 340 dead children later, HUD has still not completed the lead-paint report." (HUD finally released it last year.) And how had Operation HUD fared? Ripskis has talked of supposed supporters who canceled appointments, of frightened, if not apathetic, co-workers; and, unable to organize even within his own department, he saw his trial efforts flop at Commerce and other agencies.

But at least, Ripskis and *IMPACT* survived. Fed up with the agency, some of *Quest*'s stalwarts left HUD; the paper itself petered out in early 1973. Ripskis, on the other hand, dug in. Busy taking on an entire bureaucracy, he tried hard to keep peace with his bosses above him. So if not exactly bucking for a GS-18, he gave HUD competent work—a fact his supervisor confirmed in an interview. But could Ripskis separate his HUD work from his *IMPACT* activities? On the job he analyzed some of the very programs his newsletter knocked. Ripskis, however, says he never published secret information acquired in the course of his duties. When he found a copy of an explosive memo in his office in-basket, he promptly protected himself—telling his superiors he could show them a slightly different version that a source had mailed him for *IMPACT*. Ripskis watched out for little details like time away from the job; when he peddled *IMPACT* in front of the HUD building for just five minutes, he still logged it against his annual leave.

After a time, Ripskis could count on the services of a small team of regulars to help with editing and typing, even if he wrote the bulk of each issue himself. And some well-placed bureaucrats continued to cooperate in their own way. As Ripskis told a seminar at the Federal Executive Institute in Charlottesville, most of his information came not from GS-12s and below but "from the higher grade career employees whose programs have been mutilated by the present administration."

Of course, hard-core Nixonians not only resented Ripskis, but also frowned at colleagues seen in his company; yet some top department hands eventually began to feel that Ripskis' calliope acted as a safety valve—letting steamed-up dissidents sound off. And Lynn himself told Ripskis during a tape-recorded interview in August 1973: "You get more and you will hear more where you are than I get any day of the week. Because there are all kinds of insulation techniques. . . . But to the extent you hear this kind of stuff, if you see something going on down there, I want to know it."

Very likely Ripskis received somewhat gentler handling than he would have in a more stratified bureaucracy. With more than half a dozen departmental reorganizations since Nixon took office, the HUD bosses themselves seemed fuzzy about where they were headed. Besides, the Nixonians hoped eventually to phase out public housing and some other programs that Ripskis knocked. And he was hardly alone in denouncing HUD. So extensively did some newspapers report housing scandals that top HUD officials almost rejoiced over Watergate—thankful that the White House iniquities overshadowed the department's.

Ultimately, then, Ripskis' and *IMPACT*'s survival may have resulted not only from his own precautions, but also from the feeling by officials that he wasn't shaking up HUD enough to be a big threat. And didn't Lynn himself call Al Ripskis "a kind of ombudsman for me?" But if the Secretary and other officials think they are using Ripskis, the publisher couldn't care less. What matters, Ripskis believes, isn't what they think is happening, but rather, what actually is. So, "used" or not, Ripskis continues to play his calliope. □

OPEC AND BIG OIL

THE MALIGN COLLABORATION

LOUIS B. SCHWARTZ

The Ford Administration has come up with an amazing remedy for the "energy crisis." The cure advocated for the Arab-dictated extortionate price of petroleum is to raise prices still higher! It is proposed to tax imported crude at the rate of $3 per barrel, this to be added to the current international price of $11 with a pass-through of the new tax to the consumer. At the same time, it is proposed to drop price controls on domestic crude oil and gas. These steps, according to the President, will have the gratifying result that people will simply be forced to buy less gasoline and fuel oil. Accordingly, demand will decline, or at least "stabilize," and thus we shall have countered the cartel power of OPEC.

This Alice-in-Wonderland solution of the energy crisis is so divorced from economic reality that it must be regarded as disingenuous. The purpose of the proposal is not to restrict the use of oil, but to provide revenue to balance the politically attractive income tax cuts concurrently proposed. An additional purpose is to gratify all

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the interests in the United States that have for generations used the government to support artificially high prices for domestic oil, gas and competitive fuels. The recent quadrupling of the price of oil with no substantial "voluntary" curtailment of consumption, sufficiently demonstrates that oil consumption is relatively unresponsive to price change. Accordingly, further increases in price cannot be expected to cut demand significantly. They will, however, significantly contribute to inflation, and will cut the demand for other goods.

A real cut in demand for oil, and a real contribution to conservation, can be achieved only by rationing and, preferably for the long run, by tax or other legislation favoring the manufacture of small cars. A graduated tax based on horsepower would change car-buying habits in a manner that would not interfere seriously with travel, would reduce air pollution (in contrast to President Ford's proposal to relax clean-air standards) and would offset higher gas prices with increased miles per gallon. Along with this conservation effort should go a drive to break the OPEC cartel, thus reducing the price of imported, hence all, petroleum.

Real, as distinguished from phony, solutions of the oil crisis must respond to basic facts and rest on moral and economic principles. The central facts are that OPEC is controlling a price for crude oil that is approximately forty times the cost of production, that the multinational oil companies, which have been our "agents" to procure foreign oil and to negotiate with the sheiks, have failed us and that the U.S. Government's recent policy has been aimed at "collaboration" rather than "confrontation" with OPEC. Collaboration is Kissinger's program to bring the consumer states together with OPEC to "stabilize" the situation at current fantastic, cost-disregarding prices. Confrontation would aim at breaking the cartel, especially by concerting the U.S. buying power to make favorable bilateral deals with those suppliers who would reduce prices.

Prices should, in general, reflect costs. That is a principle of morals and economics. To the extent that prices reflect costs (including fair compensation to labor and a capital return sufficient to attract the necessary investment), a given expenditure of human effort will produce a maximum of human satisfaction. Putting it another way, price-cost parity allocates resources most efficiently. If oil that can be produced at 25¢ a barrel in the Middle East is sold at forty times that price, two misallocations follow: (*1*) The energy users, forced to divert enormous resources to pay this non-cost-justified price, will have less with which to buy meat, clothing, capital goods and services. The world is thus forced to forgo production for which it is ready to pay cost, in order to pay much more than cost for a monopolized resource; (*2*) the non-cost-justified rise in oil prices leads to an enormous and wasteful diversion of resources into finding alternatives to the monopolized resource. The difficult, expensive and dangerous development of nuclear energy, of oil production from the sea depths, of new means of extraction and transportation, absorb billions that would otherwise be spent for human needs other than fuel.

An even more dangerous misallocation of resources is occurring. The oil billions are being used to buy arms; and the build-up of Arab military power will evoke a countervailing build-up of Israel's military power. Such a perversion of the world's productive resources to weapons of mutual destruction is, at a time when millions of human beings face death by starvation, not only reckless but disgusting. War is being brought closer to the Middle East, not merely war between the Arabs and the Israelis but war between their Big Power sponsors, and even war among the Arab states. In the chaos of expanding armaments each Arab state will see a deterioration of its relative military position vis-à-vis its neighbors, or much to be gained by putting to hideous use the new instruments being provided by the West (including Russia). The immorality of OPEC's extortion of monopoly prices for petroleum inheres therefore both in the excessive returns and in the use to which those returns are put.

This immoral and dangerous redistribution of wealth is the result of an agreement or conspiracy among the OPEC countries to limit production and to exact an arbitrary monopolistic price from the rest of the world. Cartel agreements of this type are illegal and even criminal under the laws of the Western nations when engaged in by private companies, for the reason, among others, that charging a monopoly price is equivalent to levying a tax on consumers. When interests inside or outside our country levy taxes upon us other than through our own political processes, the issue of "taxation without representation" arises. As in the case of the American Revolution, that issue can lead to violence. To say that the oil "belongs to them" is no answer to the charge of immoral and uneconomic exaction. Ownership, when dispersed among numerous proprietors, does not carry with it the power to exact prices above cost: competition among proprietors would usually divert trade to the low-cost producers. The power of OPEC nations to overcharge results from the agreement among them to consolidate their bargaining position, not from their individual "ownership."

OPEC is, of course, not the only cartel in the international oil market. The giant multinational oil firms functioned as a private cartel long before OPEC appeared on the scene. They collectively maintained the price of oil far above the cost of production, thus denying energy to some who could have paid a reasonable competitive price and misallocating resources toward production of more costly fuels. They maintained their united front not by an overt comprehensive cartel agreement, like OPEC, but by a complex network of interrelationships, including partnerships to develop new fields or markets, multiple contracts for exchange of oil and petroleum products among themselves and, above all, unspoken understandings—typical of oligopolies—not to challenge one another commercially but to "follow the leader" in pricing for particular markets. By this means, for example, Middle East oil was for decades sold in the Mediterranean on the basis of Gulf Coast prices, i.e., as if it had been produced at high cost in the United States and transported thousands instead of hundreds of miles. Moreover, there is little reason to doubt complaints of OPEC members that the private cartel exploited their

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weak, unorganized suppliers as well as their weak, unorganized customers, exercising monopsony power on one side as well as monopoly power on the other.

There is small comfort for the rest of us in the "countervailing power" seemingly provided by the private oil cartelists confronting OPEC. The great multinational petroleum companies do not represent us. They certainly cannot be identified with any single national interest, e.g., of the United Kingdom, or the United States, or Holland or France. The obvious solution to tensions between superpowers—as Kenneth Galbraith observed in *American Capitalism: The Concept of Countervailing Power*—is a treaty of alliance, i.e., power sharing at the expense of the unorganized. It takes little imagination to envision the course of negotiations between OPEC and the cartelists. OPEC wants the highest price extractable from the industrial consumer nations. The oil companies' position is not inherently antagonistic to that desire, since any increase in the total revenues enlarges the companies' potential income (if the sheiks are not too greedy). Also, the value of the companies' reserves in the United States and elsewhere rises by breath-taking billions with each rise in the current price called for by the Saudis.

What will most preoccupy the companies is that the price increases be so handled as to avoid three undesirable responses: (*1*) A genuine rapid search for alternative energy sources which would reduce the demand for oil; (*2*) nationalization, excess profit taxation, or other adverse political responses in the "home" country; (*3*) any undermining of OPEC control, either through covert violation by a member, or by rapid development of non-OPEC oil fields, since an uncontrolled oil source would lead to price cutting and upset the balance of power among the oil companies in favor of whichever one found the new source. Arabia will be most understanding of the companies' apprehensions on each of these scores.

OPEC member countries have begun to buy or confiscate interests in the oil companies' transportation, refining and marketing operations—activities outside the boundaries of the producing country. The private organization is retained on a profitable basis to carry on the activities for the new owner. This progressive integration of the companies into the OPEC cartel tends to consolidate both the governmental and the private cartels. The main sources of supply become permanently tied to the main outlets to the market. The probability that a new refiner or marketer will come on the scene to serve consumers independently is reduced. The chance that a new oil discovery will find its way to consumers by a route other than through the cartelized marketers is slim. There is talk already that the consumer nations need to engage in a little "counternationalization" of Arab interest in non-Arab petroleum operations.

The grim picture is oversimplified—unavoidably so in a brief analysis. Company policies are not perfectly aligned, if for no other reason than that they are differentially dependent on OPEC oil. They are rivals for sources and markets as well as collaborators. Some of them are responsive to public opinion and to political pressures in the home country. But these moderating influences are inadequate to qualify the companies to represent the national interests of consumer countries. The underlying conflict of interests is too plain, and the history of the companies' commercial policies too dubious.

An American reaction to the situation was recently embodied in a bill, tentatively approved by a Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This "Foreign Oil Contracts Act of 1974" purportedly is intended to increase the political accountability of the international oil companies. It would require registration of all contracts for procurement of substantial quantities of crude or refined petroleum; forbid any "United States business entity" to enter into such contract without approval of the Federal Energy Administrator (but a contract is deemed approved if not disapproved within twenty days of registration); authorize the Administrator to inspect records of companies submitting contracts for approval; and make public all registered contracts, except to the extent that publication would "seriously interfere with the national interest in obtaining secure supplies" of petroleum products. In exercising his authority to approve, the Administrator would consider "any threat to the economic well-being of the United States or of other importing nations," the availability of other lower-priced oil, the tendency of the contract to concentrate access to any oil production "in the hands of one or a small number of corporations" and "the degree to which the Administrator was consulted during negotiation of the contract."

The bill is a travesty. It is confined to contracts and ignores structural integration, e.g., mergers and takeovers. It adopts a contract-by-contract approach instead of appraising the entire skein of relationships. It does not apply to contracts made prior to enactment. It does not authorize the Administrator to withdraw approval once given. It does not assure him a continuous flow of information on changing conditions that affect the desirability of the contract. Perhaps the most interesting feature is the hint that the Administrator should involve himself in *negotiating* the contracts. Considering that the Administrator is given only twenty days to pass upon registered contracts, it would be reassuring to believe that his agents would be scurrying about the world to influence contract formation. But that would be an illusion; the manpower would be lacking and the other participants in the negotiations would obstruct intrusions by outsiders. At best, a nominal participation by the Administrator would serve to justify swift formal approval of *faits accomplis*. The most revealing comment on this bill was its characterization by one "insider" as "a more feasible alternative to establishing a direct purchasing agency of the U.S. Government which would deal directly with OPEC nations and then allocate purchased oil among U.S. oil companies."* The bill in short is a political gesture masquerading as effective governmental intervention—a triumph for the oil companies, for OPEC and for the highly placed officials in the government of the United States who favor "collaboration, not confrontation" with OPEC.

These forces find a governmental purchasing agency "less feasible" because it would expose and highlight the political confrontation between the importing governments

* Antitrust and Trade Regulation Reports, No. 679 September 10, 1974, p. A-16, quoting a Subcommittee staff member.

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and OPEC. But there is every reason for the industrialized democratic governments to press boldly for solutions grounded on economic justice and morality and to put away pseudo-solutions—including the one so often advanced these days, that we borrow back from the sheiks the billions which they are extorting from us.

The strangest and most frightening element in the whole situation is that the government of the United States seems committed, not merely to pseudo-solutions but actually to maintaining the monopolistic price levels dictated by OPEC. Secretary Kissinger, to the wrath of the French, the Japanese and others, is trying to organize a consumer nation "common front" which will, in negotiations with OPEC, settle for "stability" at or about current high prices. The sop to participating consumer nations would be some kind of insurance against Arab boycotts of individual nations, through an agreed sharing of supplies. The "gain" for the United States would be a putative (and wholly unreliable) enhancement of political influence with the sheiks, plus solidification of the U.S. world financial hegemony through the channeling of Arab billions back into U.S. investments and banks.

Behind these current manifestations of oil's power in Washington is a long, dark history of the betrayal of national interests by successive national governments. The people in government who are providing the current leaden life preserver are the ones who "promoted national security" with a suicidal national oil policy. That policy excluded oil imports in the decades when we could have had all we wanted at minimal cost, while stockpiling our own higher cost reserves for emergencies like the present; maintained a high price for domestic petroleum by encouraging state systems for manipulating production and prices in the interests of the least efficient producers; facilitated oligopolistic pricing in the domestic oil business; subsidized the oil barons through arbitrary tax credits, without requiring the exploration which those subsidies were supposed to finance; perpetuated a giant leak in the natural gas regulating system by allowing huge quantities of gas to escape federal regulation; and drove us into multibillion expenditures for high cost and dangerous alternate sources of energy, e.g., nuclear power.

The forces that have generated these economic irrationalities were reviewed by Prof. M.A. Adelman in *The World Petroleum Market* (1972). They are the "protectionist," autarchic influences that operate everywhere. In England, the National Coal Board and the Gas Council derive a perverse comfort from artificially high oil prices. In this country, operators of marginal oil wells, numerous and politically influential, enjoy the bonanza of government-sponsored inflation of oil prices. In France, expensive North African exploration and inefficient state-operated refining and marketing bureaucracies are masked by the extortionate OPEC prices. The huge vested interests in nuclear energy everywhere prosper under the umbrella of the cartel.

What, then, is it reasonable to expect of the American Government in the oil crisis? Very little. Its natural and traditional tendency is to make common cause with those who would exact the highest price for oil. But if the question is what should informed citizens demand in the way of a national oil policy, an answer is available:

¶A genuine attempt should be made to reduce needless petroleum consumption. This implies rationing and a shift to smaller cars.

¶A National Oil Resources Agency (NORA) should be created, and given exclusive right to import petroleum and to allocate imports among domestic refiners and marketers. The bargaining power of this consolidated buying agency, vis-à-vis OPEC and other suppliers, would be enormous. It might well be able to crack the cartel by playing members against one another.

¶NORA should be empowered to spend sums equivalent to the subsidies of the nuclear energy program or space exploration program to develop alternate energy supplies, e.g., from shale or geothermal sources. Investments like these would pay off in several ways. The threat would be efficacious in moderating the demands of OPEC and other suppliers. Low-cost additions to the energy supply would be fed into our energy system at cost, displacing higher cost oil. This contrasts with existing arrangements under which the oil companies themselves "diversify" into geothermal energy, for example, and market it at prices tied to the rigged international oil price. High-cost energy coming out of NORA's development program would be fed into our energy system at a calculated normalized price. The taxpayers would absorb the excess cost. That is surely preferable to the staggering increase in *all* petroleum prices which has been allowed to follow from the higher price of OPEC's oil, which is after all only a marginal part of America's total supply.

¶All oil company "secrets," at least in the international sphere, should by law be made accessible to NORA, which would exercise an inquisitorial power comparable to that of national bank examiners.

¶The Secretary of State should cease trying to organize a consumer nation cartel to engage in collective bargaining with the producer nation cartel on a basis that legitimates cartelization on both sides and freezes into the international trade system the current fantastic, cost-disregarding prices. A firm entente among the consumer nations is so unlikely, given their different situations and interests (political as well as economic), as to make doubtful the good faith of the attempt, which so far has served only to sidetrack a real solution. That solution lies, rather, in bilateral arrangements between particular suppliers and their customers. Iran or Venezuela may be willing to make concessions to country X that Libya would not consider. In this way, the solidarity of the cartel might begin to be undermined.

The OPEC nations are entitled to fair returns through conventional taxation and to royalties to the extent that each has legitimate property interests in the land. Some of them have, as underdeveloped states, moral claims upon us for constructive aid. They do not, any more than does the private cartel, have a right to dictate prices unrelated to costs, to bully us into supplying arms with which to threaten the peace of the world, to create a new crop of unearning billionaires, or to disrupt our fiscal and industrial order. A failure of nerve on the part of the Western democracies, an evasion of the challenge, can have only catastrophic consequences. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Bakunin and His Circle

DAUGHTER OF A REVOLUTIONARY: Natalie Herzen and the Bakunin-Nechayev Circle. *Edited by Michael Confino. Library Press/Open Court. 416 pp. $10.95.*

BAKUNIN: The Father of Anarchism. *By Anthony Masters. Saturday Review Press/E. P. Dutton & Co. 279 pp. $9.95.*

MICHAEL BAKUNIN: Selected Writings. *Edited by Arthur Lehning. Writings of the Left Series. Grove Press. 288 pp. Paper $4.95.*

PAUL AVRICH

"I have here with me now," wrote Michael Bakunin in April 1869, "one of these young fanatics who know no doubts, who fear nothing and who realize that many of them will perish at the hands of the government but who nevertheless have decided that they will not relent until the people rise. They are magnificent, these young fanatics. Believers without God and heroes without phrases."

Bakunin was referring to Sergei Nechayev, one of the strangest figures in the annals of the Russian revolutionary underground, whose brutal murder of a fellow student was to furnish the plot for Dostoevsky's novel *The Possessed.* Bakunin was infatuated with this "young savage," this "tiger cub," as he affectionately called Nechayev. Indeed, Nechayev's arrival in Switzerland gave the aging anarchist prophet a new lease on life, a rebirth of revolutionary hope and a breath of his native land, which he would never see again. For Bakunin, as Michael Confino puts it in his absorbing book, "Nechayev was a genuine Russian—young, revolutionary, generous, and loyal," the herald of a new generation whose energy and intransigence would overthrow the czarist regime.

Bakunin's encounter with Nechayev was relatively brief. Yet it constituted both a fascinating psychological drama and a pivotal chapter in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement, posing fundamental questions of revolutionary tactics and morality which 20th-century radicals have continued to confront. For it was during the period of collaboration between Bakunin and Nechayev that the notorious *Catechism of the Revolutionary* was produced, a document depicting the rebel as a complete immoralist, bound to commit any crime, any treachery, any baseness or deception to bring about the destruction of the existing order. The revolutionist, the *Catechism* declared, "despises and abhors the existing social ethic in all its manifestations and expressions. For him, everything is moral which assists the triumph of revolution. Immoral and criminal is everything which stands in its way. . . . All the tender and effeminate emotions of kinship, friendship, love, gratitude, and even honor must be stifled in him by a cold and single-minded passion for the revolutionary cause. . . . Night and day he must have but one thought, one aim—merciless destruction."

The *Catechism*—the first full English translation of which appears in Confino's book—has been the object of heated controversy and discussion ever since. By carrying to the ultimate extreme the doctrine that the end of revolution justifies any and all means, it constitutes the fullest statement of a creed that has occupied a prominent place in revolutionary history for more than a century. In 1969 a section of the *Catechism* was published as a pamphlet by the Black Panther Party with an introduction by Eldridge Cleaver, who tells us in *Soul on Ice* that he "fell in love" with the *Catechism* and took it as his revolutionary bible, employing the "tactics of ruthlessness in my dealings with everyone with whom I came into contact."

The authorship of the *Catechism* has been a matter of prolonged and bitter dispute. In the absence of conclusive evidence, writers hostile to the anarchists have usually attributed it to Bakunin, while others have attributed it to Nechayev, and still others to both men as a product of their short-lived collaboration. Striking new evidence on this question is contained in a letter from Bakunin to Nechayev of June 2, 1870, buried until recently in the Natalie Herzen Archives of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. It is the longest and most interesting letter that Bakunin ever wrote, taking him eight days to complete and occupying more than 40 pages of Confino's book. (There is a 13-page extract in Arthur Lehning's new selection of Bakunin's writings.)

With great feeling and power Bakunin repudiates what he calls "your catechism," together with Nechayev's whole "Jesuitical system." On the basis of this statement the *Catechism* must now be attributed to Nechayev, although it is still far from certain that Bakunin had no role in its composition or revision. For had he in fact helped with the writing or editing, that would account for the *Catechism*'s occasional Bakuninist phraseology as well as for the reported existence of a copy in Bakunin's handwriting.

In any event, his association with Nechayev led Bakunin to a re-examination of his revolutionary doctrines and, in due course, to a reassertion of his libertarian principles as against what he called the "Machiavellianism" of his wayward disciple. It was also a contributing factor in Bakunin's famous conflict with Marx, which culminated in 1872 with the anarchist leader's expulsion from the First International. We are therefore indebted to Confino for publishing this collection of documents, prefaced by a useful summary of the whole Nechayev episode, its causes, progress and consequences.

The opening section, however, centering around Natalie Herzen, the eldest daughter of the celebrated Russian Populist, is of considerably less interest and might have been foreshortened. Alexander Herzen, who died in 1870, spent the last quarter-century of his life in Western Europe, grappling, in Confino's words, with the "complex and pathetic" problem of raising his children in new cultural surroundings without severing them from their native roots. His efforts were only partially successful. Natalie, for one, while she retained her command of Russian and her concern for the fate of her homeland, went through a series of unhappy experiences, culminating in the so-called Penisi affair, in which she rebuffed the advances of a blind Sicilian nobleman who afterwards threatened to kill her. As a result, she suffered a nervous breakdown from which she was only slowly and precariously nursed back to health. She was left with a permanent distrust of new suitors, always suspecting them of being fortune hunters interested in her substantial inheritance. In the end she was never to marry, but her suspicions served her well in her encounter with Nechayev—her diary, included by

Paul Avrich teaches history at Queens College. His Kronstadt 1921 *has been reissued in paperback by W.W. Norton & Co.*

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Confino, provides a unique insight into his character—who sought her not only for her money but also as an instrument in his conspiratorial adventures.

Anthony Masters, a young British journalist, has produced the first full-length life of Bakunin in English since E.H. Carr published his *Michael Bakunin* in 1937. Carr's work, though scholarly, readable, and still indispensable to anyone interested in Bakunin, places undue emphasis on the more eccentric aspects of Bakunin's personality and career while paying too little attention to his major writings and their impact on the revolutionary and working-class movements. An up-to-date biography incorporating all the latest research (of which Confino and Lehning have performed the greatest share) has been badly needed, but Masters unfortunately does not provide it. Characterized by hasty writing, skimpy research and inadequate documentation, his life of Bakunin has little to recommend it. Masters apparently does not read Russian and is quite out of his depth when discussing the historical background of Bakunin's diverse activities. Nor does he seem to have used the most important source on Bakunin to have appeared in recent years, the multi-volume *Archives Bakounine*, edited by Arthur Lehning of Amsterdam.

Lehning, the foremost authority on Bakunin, has now put together a compact selection of his writings for the student and general reader. It must have been exceedingly difficult to squeeze such a prolific and unsystematic writer as Bakunin into a volume of this size, but Lehning has done rather well within the limits imposed upon him. His selection, however, is marred by an uncritical approach to his subject, which has virtually banished from consideration Bakunin's less attractive personal and political characteristics, particularly his mania for secret societies, his plans for an "unofficial" dictatorship to replace the Russian autocracy, and his periodic anti-Semitic, anti-German and anti-intellectual outbursts. Lehning's book, moreover, will inevitably compete with Sam Dolgoff's *Bakunin on Anarchy*, a somewhat larger and equally rich anthology published by Knopf in 1972 and available as a Vintage paperback at half the price of the Grove Press volume. □

They Lost Her in the Movies

FROM REVERENCE TO RAPE: The Treatment of Women in the Movies. *By Molly Haskell. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 388 pp. $10. Paper: Penguin Books. $3.95.*

WOMEN AND THEIR SEXUALITY IN THE NEW FILM. *By Joan Mellen. Horizon Press. 255 pp. $10. Paper $4.95.*

HARRIET KRIEGEL

Louis B. Mayer, David O. Selznick, Samuel Goldwyn and Cecil B. de Mille helped establish modes of interaction for large masses of people by codifying manners and behavior already evident in American society. In the process, they sold their own sexual and moral preferences to an eager public. Their influence was both powerful and insidious; to a significant extent, the American's sexual identity was molded in the movies. Intellectuals might scoff at Hollywood, but their scoffing was made more vehement by their grudging recognition that assembly-line daydreams could be more potent than private fantasies. In a country populated by large numbers of immigrants anxious to shed their old ways and become "Americans," movies were a major socializing force, endorsing sexual roles and standards of behavior which could be easily imitated. Only recently have we begun to examine the effects movies have had on our lives. Even today, we tend to measure our sexuality in terms of the rules the men of Hollywood set down.

Such standards might have been unrealistic and destructive, but though we claimed to know better, the hypnotic figures on the screen proved irresistible. In examining the goddesses worshipped by an entire nation, Molly Haskell reveals a good deal about our national character and our most cherished sexual myths. *From Reverence to Rape* analyzes film mythology's effects upon women, but it also has a great deal to say, however obliquely, about how the "dream factory" affected men. Concerned with the deeply ingrained belief of women's inferiority, she analyzes movies as a social product as well as a social arbiter, and she effectively demonstrates how women are encouraged to impose limitations on themselves by fashioning those selves after flickering shadows in a darkened auditorium—sexual creatures who possess neither ability nor ambition beyond their bodies.

Older men are usually depicted as sexually desirable to young women, while mature women are destructively abnormal if they have sexual drives. Men can have both love and ambition; women must sacrifice the one for the other. Men deal with moral and ethical questions; women are rarely deemed worthy of any concerns beyond those governed by instinct. Self-destructiveness and sexual humiliation are regarded as typical of womanhood but antithetical to manhood.

Ironically, during the 1930s and 1940s women in film had more interesting roles, possessed greater self-esteem and performed a variety of jobs. A substantial number of women worked as screenwriters during the 1930s. Directors such as Howard Hawks and George Cukor portrayed intelligent and articulate women in the movies they made. Even the censorious Production Code forced Hollywood to remove actresses from bed and give them jobs. But by the 1950s, the country's schizoid tendencies were fully in evidence; prurient desires bedded down with energetic virginity, Marilyn Monroe matched against Debbie Reynolds. More recently, as woman's collective consciousness has been raised, both sexpot and virgin have been replaced by the dehumanized automaton. Indeed, women on the screen threaten to disappear as the all-male picture gains in popularity.

To see how far downhill we have gone, one need only note how, in the early days of film, women were central to a picture's success or failure. Though characterizations remained highly stylized, complex and intense emotions were expressed. In one of her many insights, Ms. Haskell shows why America, obsessed with the idea of remaining "pure," chose Mary Pickford as its "sweetheart," and proceeded to make her one of the most powerful figures in the industry. Her affected childishness was a good representation of the way this country wished to see itself—free from responsibility, ever youthful, unfettered by entanglements of marriage and family, safe from the civilized traps that maturity imposes. Recurrent themes in earlier American films, these attitudes mocked themselves with increasing frequency during the 1960s and 1970s. Our national self-revulsion culminated in *The Exorcist*, an expression of a nation purifying itself while tenaciously reinforcing the centrality of innocence: responsibility for corruption lies not in ourselves but in the "supernatural." Significantly, it is a female child who is the subject of exorcism

Harriet Kriegel has recently completed a short film, Domestic Tranquillity, *for Women Make Movies, Inc. and has edited an anthology,* Women in Drama, *to be published shortly by New American Library.*

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and who is responsible for the death of three men in the gruesome process.

Both as an examination of film and as sociology, *From Reverence to Rape* is excellent. Ms. Haskell is sensitive to the feelings and needs of women without indulging in rhetorical denunciation. Particularly useful is her chapter on the "woman's film," exposing America's belief that affairs of the heart are exclusively feminine concerns.

In *Women and their Sexuality in the New Film*, Joan Mellen also attacks the film industry for depicting women as inferiors. "One searches in vain in the contemporary cinema for a new perception of women which assumes their capacities and value." Mellen has a fine sense of film as art and is responsive to film imagery and ambience. Her book contains an excellent chapter on the depiction of the lesbian, who is usually reduced to cruel caricature with even more limited options than her straight sister. And the chapter on Buñuel documents the decadence of modern society through his moods and images.

Her rather simplistic political analyses, however, restrict her insights. She uses "bourgeois" as an intellectual bludgeon, and she is, apparently, unable to make such elementary distinctions as that between an Aschenbach and the much-abused American middle class; the aristocratic Don Lope in *Tristana* is bourgeois, while the "repressive" society Jeanne and Paul are ostensibly seeking to escape in *Last Tango in Paris* is somehow lumped together with the wealthy ambassador and his drug-trafficking friends in *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*. The reader remains confused throughout as to exactly what she means by such wholesale categories.

While admitting that Jeanne is sexually brutalized in *Last Tango in Paris*, Mellen considers this less important than Bertolucci's political convictions. But those convictions have been ignored by other critics only because they are not cinematically realized in the film. Bertolucci's claim that "in our society even adultery becomes a bourgeois institution," might have been extended. Our "radicalism" is the property of the bourgeois as much as sex or Spock. Bertolucci's self-parody is noticeable in the character played by Jean-Pierre Léaud who can only experience life through a lens. Possessing the advantages of wealth, he wishes to name his children after Fidel Castro and Rosa Luxemburg.

But as Mellen herself grudgingly recognizes, it is not only the female who is diminished in this film but the male as well. What more bourgeois sexual attitude is there than that men limit their

A PIECE OF LIGHT

Taos

I watch a crumb-size ant
drag a fly—
big as a truck to him—
up my wall repeatedly
because it falls and the haul
must begin again

she says we walked two years
my soles are tough now

wet moonstones glow
under her brow
little green hands clap in sunlight
near her bare toes

when it snows in the high mountains
we make a platform of pine boughs
it's cosy under the tarp

with heat two can generate
returned to high places with nuts
beans grains
I add in thought

she says I think the chop chop
of an ax sounds blunter
and more honest
than a motor

in summer we boil lily buds

a car
leaves its choking dust-wake
on my phlox

Indians laugh and clap when we pass
people are good to us *she says*
and smiles

why must an ant make its home
so high in my beams I wonder

why do my hands all day search
the thick kingdom for sprouts
from seeds I planted

until the china sky
discolors at the rim
and living mountains
go flat in shadow

she says on winter nights
pitch flares like a torch

and at night I shell
my particular nut
for a piece of light

Carolyn Stoloff

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sexual expression to being proficient "stick men," that they avoid tenderness or commitment. Though Jeanne and Paul are from different worlds, he from a sleazy hotel harboring prostitutes and pimps, she the daughter of a well-to-do French officer, and though neither exhibits discernible inhibitions, Mellen tells us that the Bertolucci film is an indictment of the bourgeois family which "dominates culture and society, suppresses feeling and 'civilizes' the 'savage' in us all by repressing bodily needs." Consequently, Jeanne and Paul seek to escape from that society by hermetically sealing themselves off from the world, an attempt no less valiant for its failure. What Mellen does not explain is how this differs from the way most people conduct their sexual lives. Even the most bourgeois among us prefer privacy for sexual endeavors.

As laudatory as she is about Bertolucci, she is antagonistic toward Bergman, claiming that he insists on a limited biological role for his women and does not permit them the philosophical or religious quest his men occasionally enjoy. She also thinks his women are made to experience self-hatred when gratifying their physical needs or to deaden and harden themselves in denying them.

But Bergman deemed women subjects for serious study when other directors ignored them. His films contain a wide variety of interesting female characters. Many of his women, particularly in his earlier films, are delightful people who determine their own destinies, enjoy sex, and have careers. At bottom, his men *and* women seek the same things and suffer from the same anxieties. They search for life's meaning, are frightened by death and loneliness. Both sexes torture themselves by separating intellectual striving from sensual desires. Conditioned by an outmoded Christianity, few of his characters make peace with their physical selves. If anything, men are the more diminished creatures: cold, cruel, unfeeling, insensitive toward others, unable or unwilling to express love for their fellow human beings, frequently unable to function because they can no longer believe in God's love. The minister in *Winter Light* and the knight in *The Seventh Seal*, whom Mellen finds of a higher order because of their intellectual and religious quests, were not conceived of as superior by Bergman. But Bergman demonstrates that intellectuality can mask fear of human contact—charges made against the old man in *Wild Strawberries* and the lesbian Ester in *The Silence*.

And here we discover something rather curious. Mellen is distressed because lesbians are subject to caricature by the majority of filmmakers, but she is equally piqued when Bergman deals with the subject sympathetically in *The Silence*. While she can accept the disintegration of the homosexual Aschenbach (and spend an entire chapter on *Death in Venice* in a book purportedly about women), she cannot sympathize with Ester's homoerotic struggle in *The Silence*. That is the more paradoxical because it is clear that Ester's maternal instincts are stronger than those of her heterosexual sister.

In *The Silence*, Bergman isolates his people from the rest of society. Yet his characters find themselves reproducing the nuclear family with all its tensions and struggles for power. Why Mellen finds the same thing a mark of insight in Bertolucci and of sexual prejudice in Bergman is unexplained. Bergman often examines what happens to people in tightly enclosed units. In *Persona*, for example, which Mellen mistakenly believes to be about lesbianism, two women, isolated on an island, find the inner core of their personalities threatened because of their effect upon each other. Their situation in that respect is similar to that of Anna Wulf and her writer-lover in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*, and to a certain extent to what Paul and Jeanne experience in *Last Tango in Paris*—desires, illnesses, fears, personal habits, thoughts and points of view are exchanged as personalities merge.

Leaning heavily on *Cries and Whispers*, Mellen charges Bergman with being especially cruel and dehumanizing in his portrait of a woman facing death. Death itself in this view is virtually an extension of female biology. But is this a humiliation visited specifically on women? Biology limits us all; death stalks the knight as well as Agnes. The ultimate "Dehumanizer" does not demonstrate sexual preference.

If the burden of natural functions falls more heavily on Bergman's women than on his men, that is where society has placed that burden for centuries. Though his women often feel humiliated by their femininity and tortured by their sensuality, Bergman has not created these limitations. He has only to look around him and survey the damage.

To assess the position of women in modern film is not enough; one must also consider how men are diminished. They, too, have lost their capacity for courage and heroism. In contemporary film they are often sniveling, whining, pathetic creatures, hardly worthy of our sympathy or interest. While women were rarely portrayed as worthy of the admiration due the male, today's portrayals are not merely misogynist but symptoms of a wider phenomenon—the loss of belief in ourselves: our God has vanished, our culture has disintegrated, our myths have become unusable.

These books are a long-overdue beginning, but there are additional areas which demand coverage in future studies of women in film. One is the emergence of the black woman. Another is a thorough discussion of women filmmakers. Most male directors, confused by the rhetoric of the new feminism, try to hide from its threat as well as its promise behind such screen personalities as Barbra Streisand and Jane Fonda, or else create films without women at all, while the few women directors in the Hollywood establishment capitalize on the traditional view of women. There are, however, women filmmakers who have begun to recognize the necessity for a new film in which women will finally be granted authenticity. And it is to their work that we are going to have to address ourselves in the future. □

The Power of Conscience

WALLS: Resisting the Third Reich—One Woman's Story. *By Hiltgunt Zassenhaus. Beacon Press. 248 pp. $7.95.*

CLAUDIA DREIFUS

The story is movie-familiar: a young woman growing up in Hamburg, Germany, during the time of Hitler organizes her own private resistance movement and manages, through great acts of courage, to save the lives of 1,200 Danish and Norwegian political prisoners. But the heroine in this case is not Ingrid Bergman or Hedy Lamarr; she is Hiltgunt Zassenhaus, a nominee for the 1974 Nobel Peace Prize and the author of a beautifully written autobiography.

Dr. Zassenhaus, now a Baltimore physician, was 17 years old when Hitler assumed power. The daughter of a liberal Hamburg history professor, a deep believer in a humanistic Christianity, she found her personal sense of decency offended by the society she was living in. "For me," she writes, "the Third

Claudia Dreifus is a free-lance writer working in New York, whose articles on political and social questions have appeared in The Nation, McCall's, Rolling Stone, Social Policy *and elsewhere. She is the author of* Woman's Fate (*Bantam Books*).

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Reich meant windows glued over by swastikas and bonfires in which 'reverence for life' went up in flames. It meant empty façades—all that was left of a people silenced by their fear of Hitler and choked by the smoke of burning cities." For the satisfaction of her conscience, for her own happiness, she began resistance work. While attending medical school, she took on a precarious job as censor, translator and prison guard for Scandinavian political detainees. Each day, she'd smuggle her wards food, drugs and messages of hope. Late in 1945, when a secret order came down to exterminate all political internees, Hiltgunt risked her life to contact Count Folke Bernadotte of the Swedish Red Cross; Bernadotte miraculously arranged to ransom the Danish and Norwegian prisoners. All the while, the dangers were enormous. Nearly everyone around Hiltgunt died. She herself was interrogated by the Gestapo three times. When a sympathetic doctor friend advised her that she could serve life better by attending to her medical studies, she answered him philosophically: "Does it really matter how important my work is? Isn't it the effort that counts?"

Though there have been numerous anti-Nazi autobiographies in the past, *Walls* stands out as a remarkable work that simultaneously manages to be a fine adventure story and a good inspirational tale. What makes it rise above the ordinary World War II thriller-chiller is the personality of the author: she is one of those rare persons who sense and feel the meaning of all they experience. She shows us, with an almost cinematic eye, what the Third Reich looked like from the inside; we learn about old things in a new way: what it was like to be an ordinary German in a completely totalitarian society; what Germany felt like the day all the Jews disappeared; how pervasive daily terror was for the ordinary citizen; what it was like to live with the horror of aerial bombardments. From her, I myself, the daughter of two rather unforgiving German-Jewish refugees, began to see the logic behind the passivity of the ordinary German. Often, I found myself weeping while reading the book. And not just for my kinswoman, Elizabeth Levy, Hiltgunt's student—a young pianist who must leave Hamburg or die, but also for Mr. and Mrs. Decker, Zassenhaus' boarders, two very plain good Germans, whom the Gestapo murdered because they attempted to rebuild their bombed-out home—and for Mrs. Manning, an elderly peasant, who was blown to oblivion by an American bomb strike on her farm.

In this cynical post-Nixon era, when so many of us seem crippled by the numbness we see in our own society, *Walls* reminds us of the power of individual conscience. Some readers, no doubt, will find Hiltgunt's decency a bit too sweet for their jaded tastes; I found myself drawn to it. We need to read more about heroines of this order: women—people—who defy passivity to assert their own humanity. "Hitler's Germany happened many years ago," suggests Zassenhaus in one of the few moments when she preaches, "but it could happen today. Again we are living in a world torn by some of the same forces that either activated or paralyzed the German people. We must identify with them in their bewildered confusion, for although Hitler is dead, he is still alive." With intelligence and grace, Hiltgunt Zassenhaus helps us make that very difficult identification. □

SLEEP, SLEEP

Evening. Bushes
hush and hang down, the roads cool.
Our fields fall inward and steam and gather
dark. The animals close and fall down

in flashes, like meteors.

Later we drink from each other deep, quiet
water of stars. The gracious
dark lays its hands on our faces,
we fall back into
sleep, sleep, the fragrant black grass.

Marilyn Thompson

A Physician Looks at Creativity

CREATIVE MALADY. *By George Pickering. Oxford University Press. 327 pp. $8.95.*

HELEN MERRELL LYND

Sometime after midnight I reluctantly read the last words of *Creative Malady*, the book that I had scarcely put down for the past two days. The next morning I was delighted to discover that in my eagerness to reach the conclusions of the last three chapters: "The Nature of Creativity," "Creativity and Illness," "The Creative Personality," I had jumped over one chapter and had that still to read.

What gives the book this magnetic power? In part that Dr. Pickering (Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, formerly professor of medicine at the University of London and at Oxford, F.R.S. and honorary member of medical and scientific societies) writes English, not technical jargon. In part the interest of his subject. In part the robust curiosity that leads him responsibly but not solemnly to carry his inquiries into the unknown. When have I repeatedly heard myself laughing aloud while reading an American psychological or social science study?

The book does not, as the jacket says, explore "for the first time" the relationship between illness and creativity. Dr. Pickering himself notes that the question of the relation between inspiration and insanity goes back to Plato. Certainly in recent years no aspect of creativity has been more discussed than its relation to, and possible dependence on, mental illness.

But Dr. Pickering does give the question a new twist—or perhaps two new twists—and brings new evidence to bear on it. He distinguishes two possible relations mental illness may have to creativity. In the first, it is preceded by a conflict. Darwin's passion (after arriving home and reading his *Beagle* notes) to find more evidence to support the theory of evolution conflicted sharply with the demands on him to become chairman of this or that, administrator of this *and* that, and to attend a seemingly endless succession of social gatherings. He resolved the conflict by seeking protection in the country, literally fortified by his illness against the outside pressures that would encroach upon his work, his destiny.

Florence Nightingale, after her superhuman efforts at Scutari, decided that the

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tragedies she saw could not be prevented without the reform of the War Department. For anyone, especially for a woman, undertaking such a reform was not easy. She resolved the conflict by becoming an invalid. No one, and especially no member of her family, could see her without permission. Statesmen came to her bedside to get their orders. Her illness enabled her to do her work and acted as a mental catharsis.

Of quite a different nature is the mental illness of Mary Baker Eddy, Freud and Proust (and Jeanne d'Arc, to whom Dr. Pickering gives 3 pages).

These powerful persons, the author believes, each used his mental illness not as a protection against intrusion upon his life work but as itself the core of that work.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning does not fall into either of these two categories. "She was creative and she was apparently mentally ill . . . [she] is apparently an example of a third category, in which psychoneurosis and creativity are independent of one another." She is, however, or therefore, of all the characters he analyzes, the one Dr. Pickering would choose as a friend or companion.

I do not recall a recent book that has made me want so much to continue discussion with its author—and not only because I have been working on related questions. I should like to talk with him about hypotheses of mine he confirms, as, for example, that, contrary to Moorehead and Eiseley, Darwin did not on the *Beagle* voyage have any coherent theory of evolution, and that it was only as, on his return, he examined the record of his precise observations, particularly in the second edition of the *Journal* of the voyage, that the theory and its mechanism became clear to him. In tracing the discoveries of these years the author gives the most comprehensive discussion of different theories of Darwin's illness I have ever seen, from Kempf's early emphasis on its probable psychological origins to Medawar's suggestion that the illness was largely physical—Chaga's disease, contracted in South America. Dr. Pickering observes, "The question . . . was not whether Darwin's illness could have been Chaga's disease, but was it." To this, relying on A. W. Woodruff, a specialist in tropical disease, he gives an emphatic no.

Perhaps even more I should like to talk with Dr. Pickering about conclusions of his that I question. Believing that mental illness contributes greatly to creativity, he implies that psychotherapy destroys or limits creativity. "It is a terrifying thought that the Darwins of today may be known to posterity only in the casebooks of the psychiatrists." I think there is substantial evidence to show that psychotherapy may, in some cases, free and strengthen creative power.

He implies that the protective psychic illness, or turning the illness into creative work, resolves the conflict that gave rise to it. I believe, with Kurt Goldstein, that ability to sustain, to live with, conflict may be one characteristic of the creative person.

He emphasizes the terror of the unknown for many persons. But, for creative persons, as his own work illustrates, the unknown also stimulates and attracts.

Dr. Pickering's brilliant mind and his great medical and scientific knowledge lead him to significant new insights in the study of creativity and creative persons. But since every way of seeing is also a way of not seeing, his special interests affect his interpretations. It is

A NOTE TO OUR READERS

from James J. Storrow Jr., Publisher

I am proud to announce another honor for The NATION -- an award for the work of our Latin-American correspondent, Penny Lernoux.

For the first time in its five-year history, the Latin-American Studies Association nominated 21 journalists and designated three finalists at its annual meeting held recently in San Francisco. The commendation to Ms. Lernoux was in "special recognition of her excellent articles appearing in The NATION".

The criteria were: focus on significant topics; wide sampling of sources; and sensitivity to regional, economic, and ethnic factors.

In addition to Ms. Lernoux, Terri Shaw and Marlisle Simons, both of the Washington Post, were selected. Not to be overlooked is the fact that all three are women.

The Latin-American Studies Association is a national organization of 1,700 members drawn from business, government, and journalism. Its 116 affiliated educational institutions represent many different disciplines.

The NATION articles honored by this distinguished group are:

Chile Will Never Be the Same ... Nov. 9, 1974
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James J. Storrow Jr.

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natural that he should give more attention to persons closest to his own field: Darwin, 64 pages; Florence Nightingale, 78 pages; Mary Baker Eddy, 22 pages; Freud, 19 pages; Proust, 18 pages; Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 20 pages. It is also natural that his criteria of appraisal should be those of his own field. He speaks often of those things that can be distinguished, analyzed and measured, of problems that can be solved, of research as "the art of the solvable." He is less interested in the arts that require other criteria of judgment and appreciation. He would like Elizabeth Barrett Browning as a companion; he does not discuss her poetry.

Such an exceptionally rich book deserves a more adequate index. And yet there may be advantages to this sparsity: as one turns back to search the pages for things not to be found in the index, one discovers gems passed over earlier. Some tossed-off asides have special importance. The book as a whole is almost infinitely suggestive. □

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

Rome

Before leaving for Europe on the way to India I saw *The Ritz* by Terrence McNally (Longacre Theatre). My memory of it is already dim. From the audience reaction I judged it to be a hit. One review I read the next morning called it funny. No doubt it is, but I also thought it witless.

McNally knows the trick of provoking yaks. The show is based on a single joke: what happens to a heterosexual, hiding from a threat of murder, in a gay Turkish bath. A supplementary joke is the presence in the establishment—called the "Ritz"—of a Puerto Rican woman of rabid aspiration to stardom who sings for the entertainment of the guests, and of course sings atrociously.

The heterosexual is Italian and a certain amount of jocularity is produced by the fact that most of his in-laws are highly inflammatory people who own the bathhouse, in addition to the taxis which bring customers there.

As with *All Over Town*, the technique involved in the construction of *The Ritz* has been compared to Feydeau, the "classic" dramatist of modern farce. There is a difference, however: Feydeau set average middle-class citizens into mad situations; in *The Ritz* (as in *All Over Town*) the characters are cartoons of no credibility at all. Instead of being surprised into laughter we are jostled into it. To some extent we succumb to the treatment, but with only momentary satisfaction. There are assaults on our risibilities but little authentic humor. Jokes about homosexuals and their alleged maniacal promiscuity are becoming as banal as those about the traveling salesman invited to sleep the night with the farmer's daughter.

Rita Moreno, fiercely headlong in pursuit of a producer who will launch her on the road to fame, provides the chief pleasure of the evening. F. Murray Abraham as a helpful Turkish bather and Paul B. Price as one who goes for fat men are outstanding in a generally adept cast, well directed by Robert Drivas in an effectively tricky setting by Lawrence King and Michael H. Yeargan. But I left the theatre with a sour taste in my mouth and a keen desire to be off on my journey.

A Midsummer Night's Dream at the tiny Mitzi E. Newhouse Theatre of Lincoln Center is a nice show for the kids. Very simply done, with a scenic look of modernity, it attempts nothing more than to amuse with cute gags which children will delight in and adults find pleasant.

Richard Ramos plays Bottom broadly and well. With the collaboration of his fellow thespians, the Pyramus and Thisbe episodes become the most agreeably silly of the evening. As director, Edward Berkeley has prettied the piece with jolly bits of business; his "Dream" is the best Shakespeare that has been shown this season under Joseph Papp's management. For the most part the men speak more intelligibly than the women—and the elder are superior in this respect to the younger. Kathleen Widdoes is attractive as Hippolyta, but I could not understand everything she said.

Though certainly benign, it is a production that breaks no new ground. But, to confess all, nowadays I go reluctantly to see Shakespeare; I am so rarely gratifyingly astonished.

When I was 20, I thought H.L. Mencken the cat's whiskers. He was wonderfully cocky, irreverent about everything we thought it right to scorn: blue-nosed Puritanism, Comstockery, official blather in literature, morals and politics. He led me to read Dreiser, and to such others as Frank Norris and Joseph Conrad. Mencken was undoubtedly a brilliant journalist with a rambunctious vocabulary of salutary vulgarity. For all his pretended contempt for these United States—"the greatest show on earth," he called it—he was overwhelmingly American.

Paul Shyre has made a one-man show of Menckenana at the Theatre de Lys. His Mencken is charming and wholly companionable, almost tender. But Mencken's thought or, more properly, his attitudinizing, now strikes me as adolescent. His is a largely foolish iconoclasm. Today he can be a culture hero only for intellectually undernourished college students. Historically, Mencken performed a useful service—his *The American Language* was a pioneer work—but apart from his wittily turned formulations and epithets of dissent he has today little substantial value. □

ART

LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

Artists have recently offered several proposals for reform of the gallery system, the basic complaint being that the dealer makes too much money out of the artist. Contract forms, like the Artist's Reserved Rights, Transfer and Sale Agreement, have been designed to retain for artists most of the profits taken by dealers and the rights assumed by collectors. However such proposals, if enacted, would remove the motive that keeps most dealers in the business—that is, to make money. Thus the prospect for a general idealistic overhaul of the distribution system, one that would enrich artists and turn dealing into a nonprofit activity, seems illusory. The gallery system as a whole does distribute a great deal of art, more than any alternative mode of distribution so far suggested, and for this reason is certainly not yet obsolescent. (A second, rationalized version of the Artist's Reserved Rights . . . Agreement has just been published and is available from the *Art Workers News*, 32 Union Square East, New York, N.Y. 10003.)

However galleries can be caught in abuses and when they are the facts should be reported. The recent exhibition at the Whitney Museum of the paintings of Richard Pousette Dart is a case in point. It consisted of thirty-one paintings, all but two from the period 1965-74. Twenty-three of the works came from a single New York dealer, four from a dealer in Boston, and four from straight sources. Everything was reproduced in color in the catalogue. Pousette Dart has recently changed dealers and it is the new one, Andrew Crispo, who loaned the great majority of the paintings and presumably, given museum practice, paid for all that color.

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This overreliance by a museum on a single source, and that the artist's dealer, is unsound. It is hard to get away from the suspicion that the museum, supposedly an institution of some autonomy, was more dependent than it should have been on a merchant, was in fact serving as his showroom. The doubt is increased by the fact that this is the second exhibition of Pousette Dart's work at the Whitney Museum. The first was in 1963 when he showed forty-three paintings of 1939-63, twelve of them from the 1960s. Why another Whitney show twelve years later? Is it because Pousette Dart has developed in some extraordinary way? No, he continues to do what he does—all-over Abstract paintings with intimations of the cosmic. Or has the Whitney run out of American painters worth exhibiting and must, therefore, rerun its old program? Here are some people who have not yet had one-artist shows in a New York museum: Larry Bell, Ronald Bladen, Louise Bourgeois, George Brecht, Elaine de Kooning, Richard Diebenkorn, Richard Estes, Oyvind Fahlstrom, Perle Fine, Audrey Flack, Leon Golub, Newton Harrison, Alex Katz, Sol LeWitt, Richard Lindner, Robert Mallary, Agnes Martin, Malcolm Morley, Raymond Parker, Philip Pearlstein, Larry Poons, Fairfield Porter, Leon Polk Smith, Theodoros Stamos, Wayne Thiebaud, Jack Tworkov, Esteban Vincente, Peter Voulkos, Charmion Van Wiegand and Robert Watts. This list of thirty-odd artists comes from the top of my head, but I think the point is made: all of them have been around long enough to demonstrate, by a continuous body of work, their seriousness and quality. And none of them is obviously inferior to the twice-blessed Pousette Dart. This list, which can be broken down in several ways, includes: six women artists, seven sculptors, seven Realist painters, eight Abstract painters, with other points on the spectrum of styles.

So to the question, why another Pousette Dart show, the answer seems to be either that the curator James Monte loves this artist's work to distraction or that the artist's new gallery persuasively indicated its eagerness to cooperate with the museum. If the former, Monte's personal taste has blinded him to his responsibility to other artists; if the latter, the museum has been delinquent in allowing itself to be used as an adjunct to the market.

Jane Freilicher is showing landscapes and still lifes at Fischback (until March 1). She has painted a series of pictures of the view toward and around the blue loop of a bay seen from her house on Long Island. The security of domestic life is extended by the repetitions of the view. The place is not transformed, as are the sites in Monet's series, but presented with sustained soberness and grace. The detail in these paintings is impacted in a band where the middle distance meets the horizon. Here are the regular forms of man-planted trees and low-roofed houses and the conjunctions of summer porches and automobiles. Although there are no large objects in the landscapes, the pileup of small forms is never weakened by lateral diffusion. The canvases are usually upright or, if horizontal, squarish, so that the format maintains the intimate focus on unemphatic objects.

Freilicher's way of focus by zoning concentrates the detail centrally and leaves her free to use her soft touch with a brush in the foreground foliage and the open sky. She depends on traditionally painterly resources. The individual touches are not descriptive of things seen, but their grouping is: the areas occupied by trees and bushes are unmistakably agitated and fluffy; larger areas, like the sky, are painted as flowing, undulent planes. In her still lifes I miss a rationale that relates space and painterliness, though it is only fair to add that in this show the landscapes predominate and have obviously been her main project. The scatter of painterly marks occurs freely across the flowers and objects of the still lifes, but without that matching of visual experience and painterly touch that gives such acuity to her low-profile but eventful middle distances. In two of her still lifes she focuses on the table objects and softens the city skyline seen through the window, but this is a mechanical device compared to her softly structured landscapes. Their boldness should not be underestimated: the divisions of ground plane and sky are absolute, with no overarching trees and almost never linked by mediated foliage in the conventional way. These paintings should not be judged by their calm but by their discipline.

Carl Andre, the sculptor, has been showing "Words in the Forms of Poems" at the John Weber Gallery. Bits and pieces of his poems have been seen before, but this is the first full display of his word works. The exhibit includes poems from a seven-volume limited edition published in 1969, as well as new pieces. The earliest work, *Passport* (1960), is the least interesting: it is one of those collage-masters-the-world pieces which artists used to employ in free-

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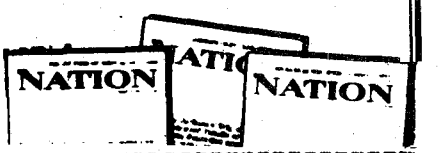

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ranging compilations of everyday material, an application of the bulletin board structure to bookmaking. Andre's real work begins after this splurge in a series of impacted works in which it is not the ramification of meaning that interests him, but its restriction. Words are solidified in blocks, grids and rows. Here are examples of the procedure: in *Flags* (1964), an "opera" for three voices, the three rows of alternating words are taken from the titles of paintings by de Kooning, Pollock and Gorky. In *Names* of the same year the words for three voices are drawn from official charts of the stars, Boston Harbor and the Blue Hills Quadrangle, Massachusetts. Andre is from Massachusetts but his poetry is not personally revelatory.

His is a poetry made out of words as common property, not words as a language with which poets have a privileged liaison. By the recurrence of quoted words he substitutes systematic, incantatory pattern for semantic reference. It is poetry written on and shaped by a typewriter and distributed by Xerox. Copies of the poems are available for sale at the gallery, not priced like original graphics but at the cost of a book or pamphlet. (Andre, one of the artists who has agitated for a reform of the gallery system, is thus showing one of the ways to distribute art "democratically," as opposed to transactions in "property" —i.e., selling originals.) The terse concreteness of Andre's literary form is the analogue of his sculpture. The comparison of the arts is achieved by the spatialization of language. □

CHRISTMAS EVE

Now my father carries his old heart
in its basket of ribs
like a child coming into the room
with an injured bird.
Our ages sit down with a table between them,
eager to talk.
Our common bones are wrapped in new robes.
A common pulse tugs at the ropes
in the backs of our hands.
We are so much alike
we both weep at the end of his stories.

Ted Kooser

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore, Martin Scorcese directing, is a paper-thin, sentimental comedy that, by dint of smart acting, a sassy script and first-class photo-documentation of the natural beauty and social squalor of the American semi-arid West, registers as compelling entertainment. It is earning critical raptures that will probably turn out to be better for its immediate box office than for its eventual reputation. The picture has a surface of bright impudence that recalls *Paper Moon*, but Bogdanovich brings a kind of skewed imagination to his work that I don't see in *Alice*, despite the marvelous offbeat performance of Ellen Burstyn in the title role.

As a little girl living somewhere on the "pray-ree," Alice, we learn in a prologue, was a foul-mouthed kid with the not unusual dream of astonishing her unsympathetic elders by blossoming into a popular singer. However, when we catch up with her some twenty years later, she has dropped her career as a provincial entertainer and, scatological as ever, is living in a New Mexico jerry-built development with an inarticulate thug of a truckdriver husband and their 11-year-old bespectacled son. The husband very soon gets himself killed in a road accident. Alice sells up the place, buys a station wagon, and she and the boy set off for Monterey, far away in California, her idea—in which she has no great confidence—being to sing in joints along the route for motel and gas money.

Somewhat to her surprise, she goes over in a cowboy saloon, but has the bad luck to start an affair with a charming Jack Nicholson type (Harvey Keitel), who turns out to suffer, when cornered, from hysteria with homicidal overtones. She and the boy skip town in a panic and farther up the road, there being no more singing jobs, she finds herself waiting on table in a hash joint run by a conspicuously benevolent owner-chef and dominated by a veteran waitress (Diane Ladd) even more outspoken than Alice, but pure gold beneath a veneer of brass. This time the boy friend (Kris Kristofferson) is a young, handsomely bearded owner of a small ranch, recently divorced, eager for a mate, and an exemplary companion for an overbright but lonely boy of 12. He tries the dominating male bit with Alice, but when that brings out the alley cat in her, contritely promises to conform to her prescription for domestic harmony. At the end of the film, it looks very much as though the traveling days are over.

Alice succeeds as entertainment and exposes itself as sentimental for the same reasons—the characters are bright, highly flavored, uppity, quick-witted, but essentially loving and nurturing far beyond the norm of what you may expect to meet on the motel, superhighway, corner saloon and quick-lunch circuit. They volley the dialogue with a disdainful ease that gives it a sparkle I fear you would not find in the script. Alfred Lutter plays the brat as a monster of self-centered precocity, with a gift for banter that catches you in the ribs because kids aren't supposed to think that fast. At the same time, he demonstrates a wistfulness and mistrust of the future that can turn a whole audience into mother hens. Ellen Burstyn has a bravura part and plays it with class; she displays Alice as a man-loving woman, hiding her terror at being alone in the world behind a vocabulary that would make a Marine Corps drill sergeant thoughtful. In point of fact, and except for the dude with the switchblade, everyone she runs into becomes her friend, confidante, lover or indulgent employer. Alice is gallant, handsome and boisterously healthy in a time that's out of joint—no wonder that the audience laps her up. Nonetheless, it's a sentimental put-on, for though the problems may be real enough, the solutions are fairy godmother.

Since even popular entertainment takes on color from current preoccupations, we'd better consider *Alice* from the viewpoint of women's rights. I don't know what the women are saying about it, but it would surprise me if they're pleased. For all her zing and intrepid defiance, she's bluffing her way along in search of a man. She wants a decent man, which is reasonable enough, and she has a dangerous facility for getting close to likely candidates about whom she knows nothing (she tells her son that she married his father because he was a "good kisser"). But once she finds Mr. Right, the rancher, her troubles are clearly over. So, we hope, are the rancher's and the boy's, but that's an old, sweet story that doesn't say much about a constructive realignment of the sexual balance. □

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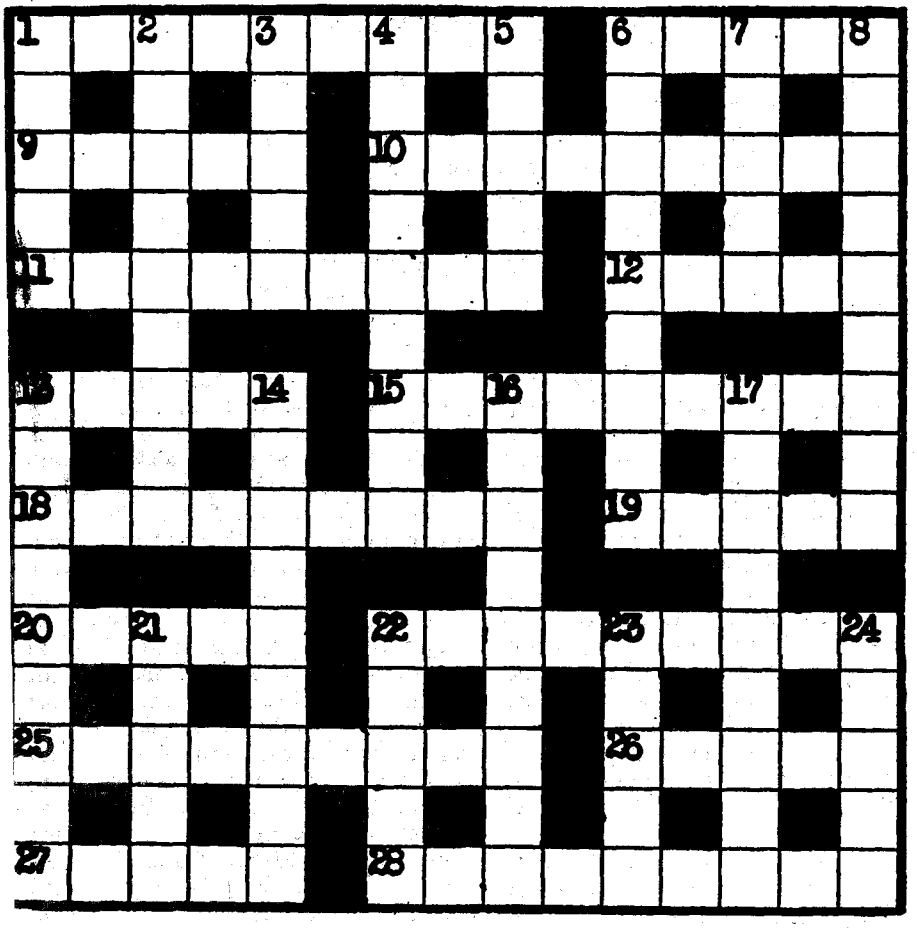
Crossword Puzzle No. 1572

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 6 Would such a marriage be rather hard to understand—or is there a slight delay while things get straightened out? (9,5)
9 In the main, it was once jolly. (5)
10 One considers him mere dirt, but you can see what might be shined. (9)
11 Maxim possibly engraved on a turnip?
12 The inventor of a slate product? (5)
13 Taking a different route might be extravagant. (5)
15 It's untidy, but I'd clean it, just the same.
18 The sort of hens that get in with red around what may be cherished as sacred. (9)
19 How one cries, in letting certain dogs slip! (5)
20 Give forth like Sir Toby? (5)
22 It may be part of the air fleet, but poor P.R., nevertheless. (9)
25 Possibly the last one in the tug-of-war to give you the news account of it! (6,3)
26 It's not a very nice thing for a runner to add a little spirit to something. (5)
27 The one of Gerontius was set to music by Elgar. (5)
28 Promises more than can be delivered.

DOWN

1 and 13 down What one might do with Monopoly dice and refuse when sailing. (5,9)
2 Thinks hard about the way the CIA gets to make it. (9)
3 The direction of the sun or the stars? (5)
4 Take care—he does! (9)
5 Landed proprietor 3 of England. (5)
6 A sewer might, in the way of Chet Smith.
7 They circulate on automobile exhausts. (5)
8 and 24 Would one not expect to find a solid force behind it? (9,5)
13 See 1 down
14 The sort of 1 down which one might find in a mare, if well-broken, though you might have to dig for it. (9)
16 With this in the running, it makes you last. (9)
17 But they often do it minimally, even if she appears inside as well. (5,4)
21 Traditionally filthy and cruel, perhaps.
22 Time set for playing. (5)
23 Where a little green might be found, and nothing unchanged. (5)
24 See 8 down

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1571

ACROSS: 1 Change trains; 9 and 10 Indicative mood; 11 Sheep dog; 12 Gentle; 13 Grebe; 15 Deadlock; 16 Bagpiper; 19 Haiti; 21 Idiocy; 22 Subsides; 24 Bola; 25 Ecological; 26 Aladdin's lamp. DOWN: 2 Hunt high and low; 3 Naivete; 4 Eland; 5 Raingod; 6 Ideograph; 7 Seminal; 8 Collective farm; 14 Emphysema; 17 Pro rata; 18 Respond; 20 Initial; 23 Blown.

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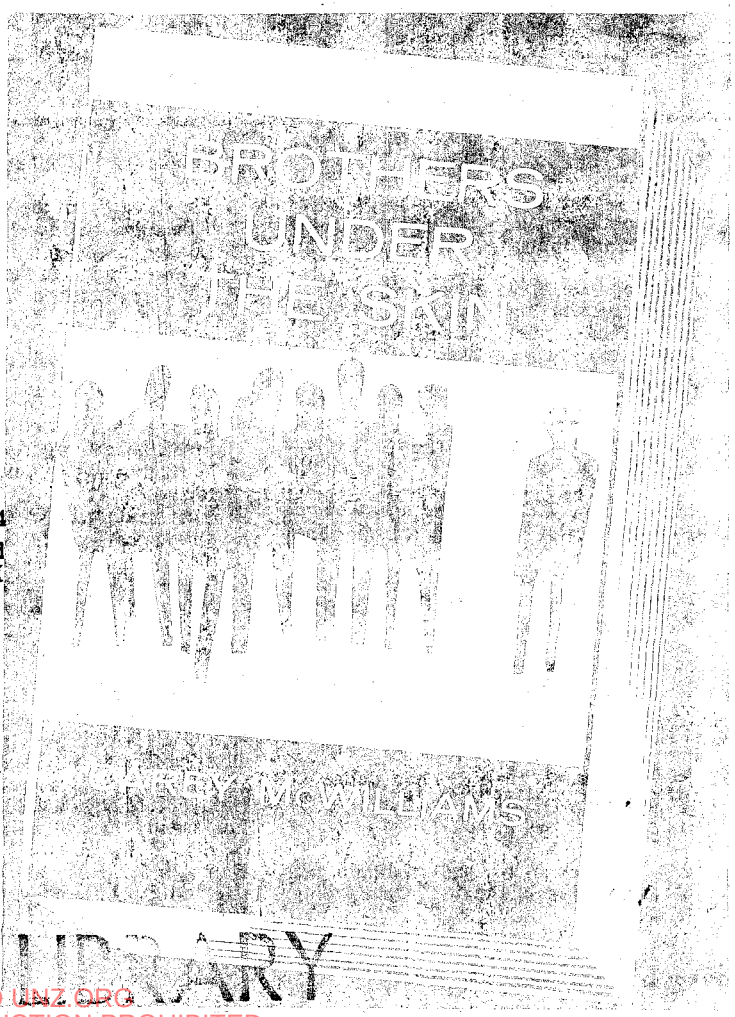

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